The Saturday Review of Literature

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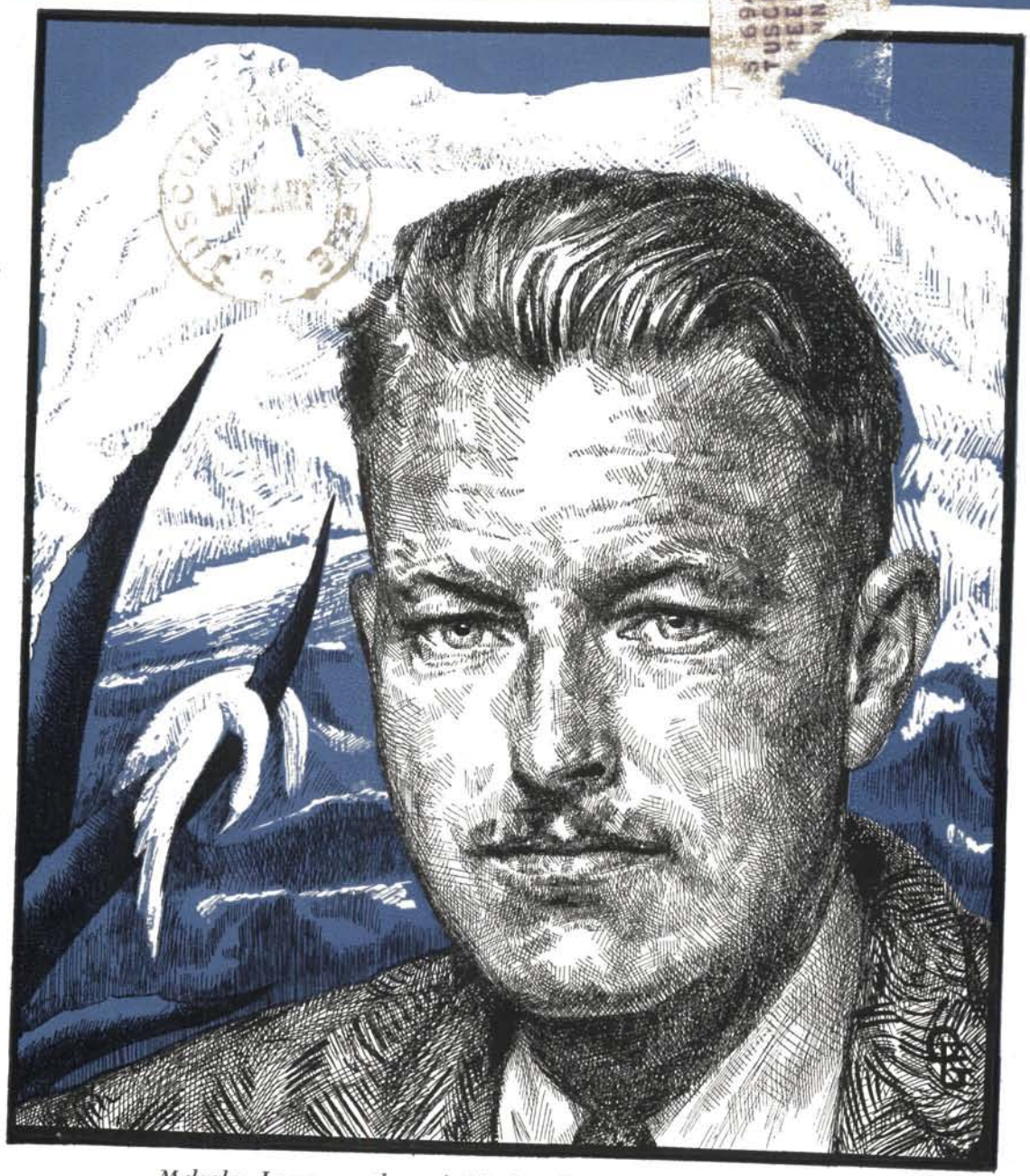

Malcolm Lowry, author of "Under the Volcano." (See page 9)

The Pen and the Distaff

By MARYNIA F. FARNHAM

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February 22, 1947

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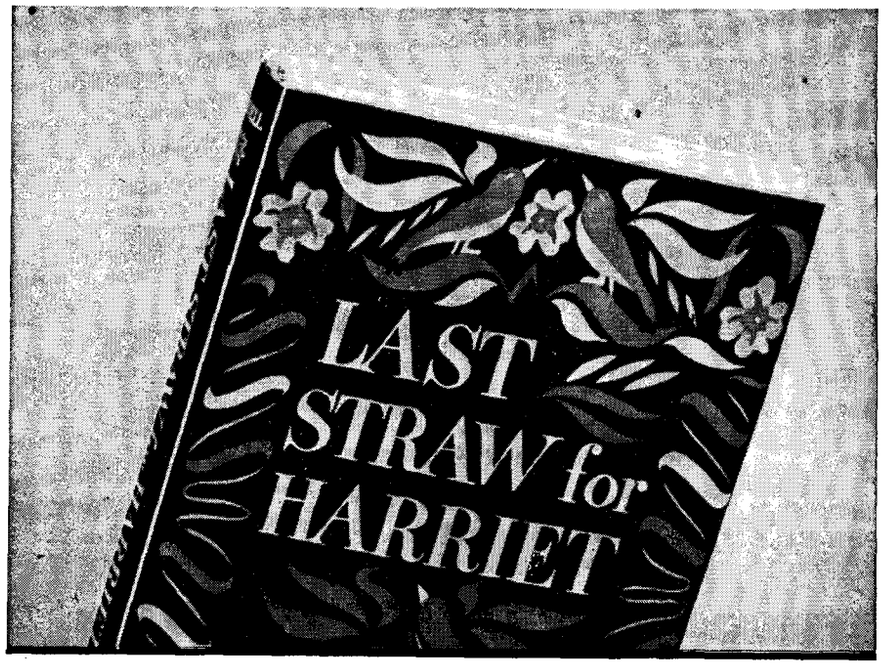

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MORROW

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TRADE Winds

THE 5:22 TO MILLERTOWN is always crowded, but on Friday evenings it is far worse than usual. Week-end guests clog the aisles, standing forlorn guard over their luggage, unhappily contemplating two days of sleeping in uncomfortable spare beds and being yanked out of them in the early dawn to make fourths in games they detest. Sunday nights they straggle back to town, where they can't get taxis, and arrive home exhausted and out of sorts. It usually takes until Wednesday for them to rest up at the office, and be able to take the wife's "we're going down to the Wimpferdingers this week end" without reaching for an iron poker.

Mr. Gilley knew all about the Friday crush, and on that evening always got to Penn Station ten minutes ahead of his usual time. This once, however, he was held up at the office, and was lucky to get the last empty seat in the smoker. The reason it stayed unoccupied until last was obvious: the man by the window not only spread himself over three-fifths of the double seat, but had a mess of packages and magazines piled next to him. The very way in which he glared at his *Evening Sun* seemed to say, "Keep out, you bloody interlopers!" When Mr. Gilley slid in alongside him, he grunted like a tugboat in a fog, but didn't condescend to turn his head.

The train was well past Newark before Mr. Gilley made his great discovery. He was so excited he almost squealed his "my goodness, aren't you Waldo Weltschmerz, the novelist?" His companion lowered his newspaper three-quarters of an inch, and said, "I am. So what?"

"Well, for goodness sake," quavered Mr. Gilley. "Think of meeting the author of the Number One best seller! Wait till Mrs. Gilley hears about this!"

It was apparent from Mr. Weltschmerz's attitude that he intended to wait in silence. Mr. Gilley was trembling slightly as he spread open his tabloid. A few minutes later he ventured, "I see here where Toots Shor looked into a mirror and called *himself* a crumbum by mistake." Weltschmerz ignored this, but Mr. Gilley tried again. "I declare! Jane Russell sleeps under a blanket and a pajama top whenever the temperature drops below zero!" Weltschmerz merely grunted, but when Mr. Gilley persevered, and read aloud, "As predicted exclusively in this column two days ago, Oscar Lump will get the public dog-catcher's post in Oswego, New York," he evidently decided that he would be given no peace on this journey, for he suddenly turned accusingly to Mr. Gilley and demanded, "How did you recognize who I was?"

"Goodness," said Mr. Gilley. "Your picture is on the back cover of your novel. I see it everywhere I turn."

"You must be a magician," growled Weltschmerz. "My publisher, an imbecile named Bump, manages to be out of stock of it five weeks out of six. There wasn't one copy in the whole city of Wappinger's Falls last Tuesday!"

"I don't understand," said Mr. Gilley. "Isn't it just as much to the interest of this, er—imbecile Bump to keep a best seller in stock as it is to the author's?"

"Bump is a book publisher," explained Weltschmerz. "In other words, he's a crook. All he wants to do is sell the picture rights. That's because he tricked me into cutting him in for ten per cent. Think of it! I slave on a book for months, and that crook gets ten per cent of the picture rights."

Mr. Gilley looked very puzzled. "I thought I read somewhere that it was your publisher who named the novel," he said, "and that his editors rewrote the last six chapters for you, and that his advertising agent won some kind of a plaque for the way he put it over."

"Typical publishers' propaganda," snorted Weltschmerz. "They're all crooks."

"But didn't you have a lawyer look over the contract before you signed it?" persisted Mr. Gilley.

"Yes, I did," Weltschmerz admitted grudgingly. "But what good did that do? My lawyer is an even bigger crook than my publisher. I'm getting a new one."

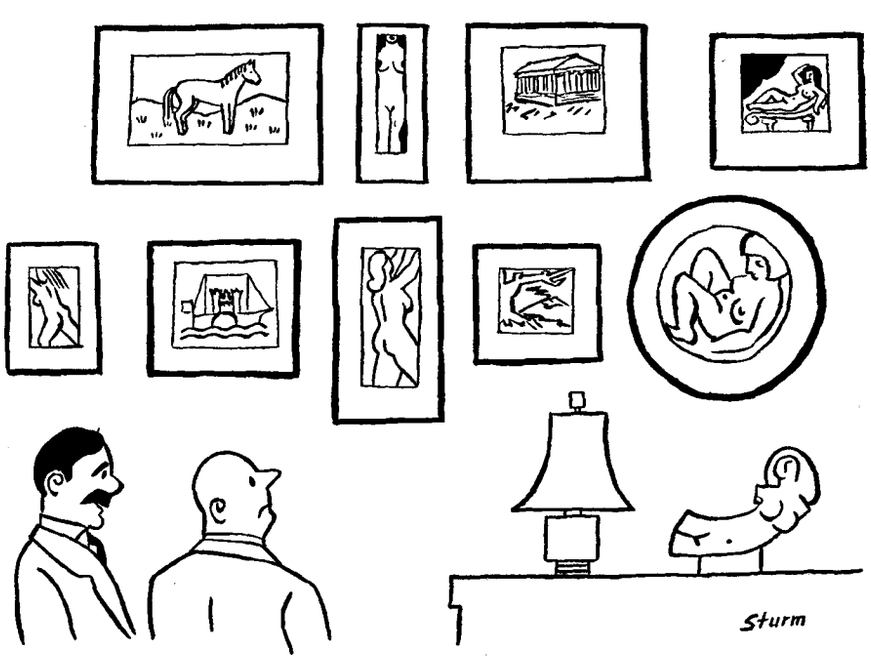
Mr. Gilley shook his head sadly, and said, "I guess this is one case where even as important an author as you could have used a good agent."

"I had one," thundered Weltschmerz, "You know what the fool said to me when I found out about that ten per cent clause? He said, 'How did I know two years ago those picture rights would ever be worth a nickel?'" Weltschmerz leaned closer to Mr. Gilley. "Personally," he added, "I think all agents are in cahoots with the publishers. Plain crooks!"

Mr. Gilley refused to be discouraged. "Maybe that new Writers' Group in Hollywood . . . ," he began. "Don't talk to me about Hollywood," interrupted Weltschmerz. "After my picture ran ten weeks at Radio City, I wanted to buy a tiny piece of it for myself. Do you think those crooks would sell it to me? Just think, my *own* story! And to cap the climax, I find today I'm in the 83 per cent tax bracket. I don't know why I bother cashing my royalty checks. I might just as well endorse them and turn them right over to those crooks in Washington."

Mr. Weltschmerz obviously was just warming up to his subject when the conductor called, "Millertown. This is Millertown."

Regulars and weekenders tripped over baggage in the aisles, and tum-



"My wife and I take turns choosing the pictures."

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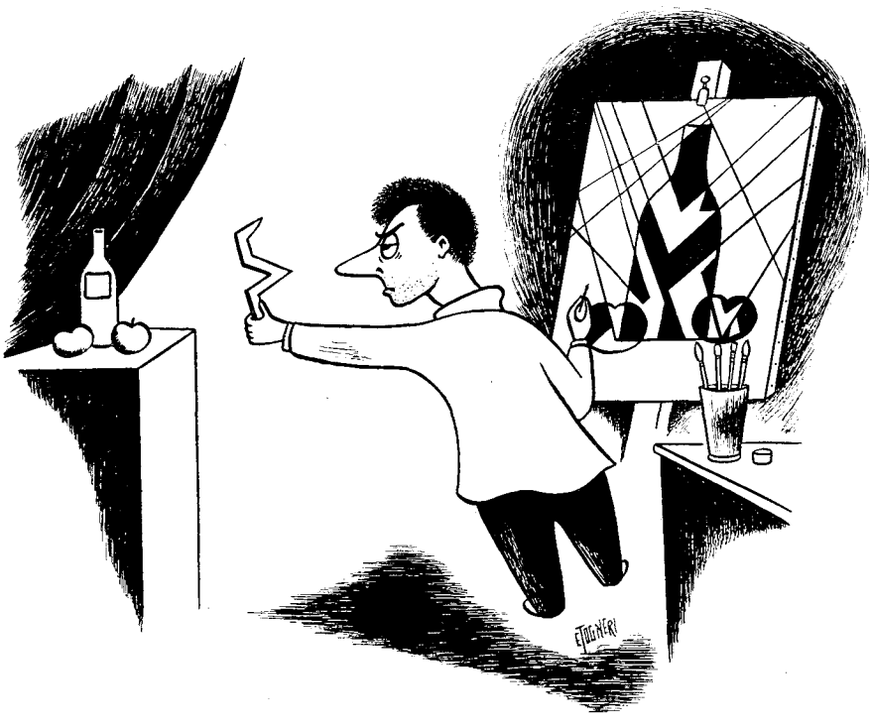


bled out of the train, the former to try and get their jalopies started, the latter to discover their hosts had forgotten to call for them. "You know who that man was who fell out just ahead of me?" exulted Mr. Gilley to his wife. "That was Waldo Weltschmerz, the author of 'Sex Mad Sophie'!" "You do meet the most wonderful people," marveled Mrs. Gilley.

Waldo Weltschmerz's wife was waiting for him at the station, too. She wanted to tell him the cook had walked out, and that they would have to eat at the Inn. "Who was that Milquetoast character you shook hands with on the platform?" she asked idly. "How the hell should I know?" growled Weltschmerz. "He insisted on talking to me on the train. He's probably some kind of a crook."

REYNAL & HITCHCOCK have sold their entire juvenile department to David McKay, and Helen Hoke, who has been developing it, will move over to McKay's to continue its supervision. In private life, Miss Hoke is the wife of Publisher Franklin Watts. . . . Viking calls attention to the tenth birthday of "Ferdinand the Bull." The Leaf-Lawson classic, now in its twentieth edition, is still very much on the active backlists. . . . Nancy "Manatee" Bruff's new novel, "Cider from Eden" (Dutton), is set in Brooklyn Heights, and opens in the 1870's. . . . Pat Frank, whose "Mr. Adam" will soon be a Broadway play, is well along with another novel, designed to pin back the ears of brass hats and State Department cookie-pushers in occupied Central Europe. All signs point to still another best seller for Lippincott. . . . Laura Hobson's "Gentlemen's Agreement" (Simon & Schuster) will be produced personally by Darryl Zanuck in Hollywood, which means that Twentieth Century-Fox's biggest stars will be fighting for parts in it. . . .

A HOLLYWOOD communiqué heralds a third — or is it fourth? — remake of "Little Women." Considering the fortunes that have been made on this beloved American classic, and the fame it has brought to players on the stage and screen, it is interesting to note that the author herself, Louisa May Alcott, thought very little of its chances when she finished it in 1867. In fact, she offered to sell it for one thousand dollars outright in lieu of royalties. Her publisher considered her doubts well founded, but he took the manuscript (written in laborious longhand) home for further consideration. That night he called several times to his usually-attentive niece, but got no answers. He found her so engrossed in the Alcott story that she was oblivious to the outside world. The next morning he made out a contract. Approximate sales of "Little Women" to date: three million copies. . . . You may recall a story that went the rounds the last time "Little Women" played at Radio City Music Hall. The drug store nearby featured a full window display of the Little, Brown and Grosset editions of the novel. A lady pointed it out to her companion, and exclaimed, "Look at that! The picture only opened yesterday, and two publishers have put it out in book form already!"

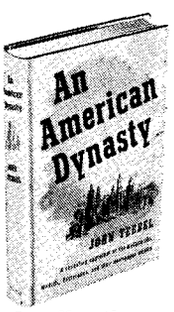
BENNETT CERF.

"From where I sit"

"I do not expect that **An American Dynasty** will reform the newspaper business tomorrow— I had to write it— My particular compulsion was derived from a long-drawn-out disillusionment, a dream that died hard. I went to work for newspapers when I was fourteen, with the feeling that this was the only occupation in the world worth a damn." That was in Michigan.

JOHN TEBBEL goes on to say "I came to see that newspaperman was one of God's most frustrated creations—forever observing and thinking one way, forever writing another. I could see that the readers of newspapers would never do anything about improving the standards of journalism, beyond mouthing the cliche about never believing what you read in the papers." And so, after years in the field of journalism, JOHN TEBBEL came to feel that he had to write **An American Dynasty.** The blurb on the book says that it is a revealing appraisal of the McCormicks, Medills, Pattersons and their newspaper empire

TEBBEL says he chose those families "because they were the prime exemplars of all that I believed was wrong with American journalism."



All this is as simple and straightforward a statement of the facts as I have heard from an author. They usually mumble in their beards and reach for another hors d'oeuvre. But TEBBEL knows where he stands and he is willing to do something about it. Morally the spoken and the printed word are public domain; yet a book is about the only vehicle for articulated freedom of speech that remains. This book is going to make a lot of people sore, especially those masters of the art of semantic distortion whose impact upon the course of events is way out of proportion with the capacities of their small minds. In an age where ills are so numerous that cures, alleviations, and remedies have become the goal, the pursuit of objective truth is almost forgotten. Yet this very truth is supposed to be the foundation of journalism. Americans and other nationalities for that matter have come to "look at the facts" as if their mothers were frightened by ostriches. TEBBEL gives us the facts and the rest is up to us. I only hope we are not sophists.

paul

DOUBLEDAY 50th Anniversary

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Journey to California

DISASTERS in the wilderness a hundred years ago have to be quite impressive to break through the creature comforts of a house in the city. On a February night, with a smell of spring strong in the air, it's not easy to turn your mind to the fate of twelve starved people at the bottom of a twenty-five foot hole in snow. At least, not until the dozen become slightly less starved and you realize that now there are only eleven.

In ORDEAL BY HUNGER, the story of the Donner Party, George R. Stewart (who also created those bestsellers STORM, MAN, and NAMES ON THE LAND) has written a book that is much more than mere documentation, a definitive account of a story that has become a folk epic. Of all the overland journeys to the West, none has more deeply possessed the American imagination than that of the Donner Party. It's not hard to understand why, for the happenings of that journey stripped away the standards of civilized life, and laid bare with terrible simplicity the elements of human behavior.

In 1846, before the gold rush had beaten out the Western trail, some eighty-seven people—men, women, and children—with their wagons, started for California. They were late in the year; they took a new, hard route; they struggled across the desert, losing most of their cattle and nearly dying of thirst. Finally, snow trapped them in the Sierras. There were desperate efforts to cross the pass, efforts to survive there by Truckee Lake; from the other side of the pass there were frantic attempts at rescue. Forty-six people got through alive.

Innumerable legends have since grown up around them. Books of recollection were written by the survivors and by persons with only second and third-hand information. From all of these, Stewart has extracted those incidents that prove themselves. Going back to original sources, consulting the diaries of the survivors and other contemporary documents, retracing on foot much of the way the Donner Party followed, he brought to the writing a freshness of creative talent plus a capacity for research that makes his book one of the most moving human documents we have ever read. There is poignant personal drama in the lives of almost all the survivors—far more poignant than the welcome death that came to others. From the numberless incidents it's difficult to single one out and say "here, this is drama". But certainly the story of the Reeds is as moving as any. A well-to-do family from Illinois, completely new to the rigors of winter in the Sierras or any other mountains, they were one of the few families to get through the ordeal with no member lost. Because they had more money than most of the other emigrants, plus a certain aristocracy of bearing, the Reeds were not especially popular. And when Reed killed another man in hand-to-hand fight, he was exiled from the company and forced to go on ahead alone. This amounted to a death sentence, but Reed managed to get through and later, when the members of the Donner Party were trapped on the Nevada side of what is now the Donner Pass, he made two trips through the snow, risking his life each time and very nearly losing it to bring the others out. Knowing more vividly than most of the rescuers how close to starvation all of the trapped people were, Reed organized a party and was going into the snow when he made contact with an earlier group of rescuers coming out. With no word of his wife or children for months, he met the starving, freezing, straggling line of women and children coming out of Bear Valley. The meeting of Reed and his wife is as simple a dénouement as any in a story which is packed with dénouements. "As the leading men of the new relief party came struggling up through the snow, one spoke out, 'Is Mrs. Reed with you?—Tell her Mr. Reed is here.' "

Heroism and cowardice were side by side—completely defined by the closeness to death of every member of the party. There was the Englishman, Denton, who was unable to go farther and gallantly sent the rest on. He died in the snow, and later, when another rescue party came through, there were lines of penciled verse pinned to his chest. He had written a poem about the stately homes and pleasant countryside of England. Later, when the men of the rescue party put in their claims, one received thirty dollars for a blanket he had left with Denton.

In the same relief was a woman who had to leave two small children behind her. One of the men promised to go back for them later, and the woman agreed when he gave a positive answer to her question, "Are you a Mason?"

Earlier an unidentified woman, on first seeing the rescuers, had asked "Are you men from California, or do you come from heaven?"

Originally published by Henry Holt and Company in 1936, a centennial edition was brought out last fall on the hundredth anniversary of the Donner Party's journey to California. More than any book which we can call to mind, ORDEAL BY HUNGER is filled with the sheer power of the human spirit winning through to life . . . filled, also, with a feeling of wilderness which is still part of America.

ORDEAL by HUNGER

The Story Of The Donner Party

By GEORGE R. STEWART

$3.50

CENTENNIAL EDITION

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

HENRY HOLT & COMPANY

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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Pen and the Distaff

MARYNIA F. FARNHAM, M.D.

IT requires considerable audacity even to approach a survey of woman's performance today in the writing field, for someone is certain to cry havoc and violently rise to assert that women are again being assassinated. Let it quickly be said that here is no arrogant attempt to rush in where the more daring residents of another sphere show no inclination to walk. These are but a few random thoughts and ideas pulled together in an attempt to determine what seem to be the preoccupations of writers. Do they seek to solve the question of man's moral nature in philosophic inquiry; do they expose the natural laws in scientific work; do they critically examine the social organizations; do they tell the long world-story once again in history; do they recount the lives of the great; do they tell the deathless tale "which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney corner"; do they rhyme the thoughts of love?

One thing they incontrovertibly do is to write. Almost one-half of the books published in the United States in recent years have been by women. They are read or they would not be published. That would seem to indicate that they are providing their exactly fair share of modern writing in proportion to their numerical strength. The question is then, are they represented in general and particular subject matter in the same fields as men, or are they given to exploiting a particular area of human experience? Do they write for a different audience with a different kind of viewpoint? Is there a kind of writing which is particularly the province of women? Whatever can be discovered by a not too profound examination of the work of present and recently-past American women writers may throw some light on the character and disposition of women.

It is easy to start out with the obvious recitation of what women *don't* talk about—in writing. They concern themselves little with the problems of science. In relation to men, their interest in the objective, the fatally false or true is limited indeed. Not for them is relativity, absolute numbers, or atomic fission. Marie Curie of radium fame and Dr. Lisa Meitner in atomic fission offer the opportunity for demurrers. But those names present a brilliant exception to the still generally unbroken rule.

One woman doesn't make a summer, either. When we look among the writings on history, politics, and economics we find ourselves in a similar position. There is no feminine Prescott, Gibbon, or Trevelyan. Few women show enough interest to react to the point of publication. That, too, would seem to be a man's world. Philosophy finds us in like case. There is no woman's name in the philosophical roster. The indication would appear that women have little interest in the problems of man's relation to the moral world. We may enter a note that women appear substantially and vigorously in the psychological literature where they easily contend with men in extent and excellence. When we approach the field of investigation of the social milieu, of anthropology and social comment, we begin to fare somewhat better in our search for women representatives. Here, too, they are vastly outnumbered by their male contemporaries (remember quantity *does not* equal quality). At once one thinks of such women as Mary Beard (who should also be noted as historian), Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead, all of whom have made notable contributions to their own particular fields.

In all these areas described, we have to do a good deal of scratching to turn up feminine examples. In some places, we find none; in others we find scattered instances. Nowhere do we discover an interest among women comparable to that among men. In all cases, of course, the entrance of women has been of recent date. However, as we approach the vast field of fiction or story telling we begin to pick up the sound of women's voices. There they appear to come into their own, are conspicuous, almost ubiquitous. The tellers of tales, the spinners of yarns—those women are supreme—if we are to judge by their appearance

—George Platt Lynes.

Dorothy Parker, defying attempts at pigeonholing, has something of a corner on unrelieved hostility toward both sexes.

—Ben Pinchot.

Ayn Rand, of "The Fountainhead," and another non-categorite, shows a rare preoccupation with a philosophical problem.

—Newsreel.

Lillian Smith consistently displays an equally rare concern with a social disaster.

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on publishers' lists. Not only are they published, they are popular; they are read enormously, if we are to judge by best-seller lists. No one would conceivably fail to think of Ellen Glasgow and Willa Cather or, more recently, Pearl Buck, Kay Boyle, and Katharine Anne Porter. No one could fail on Margaret Mitchell. That would be to sacrifice one's franchise; nor could one omit Eudora Welty and Carson McCullers.

This recitation omits entirely any mention of those women writers who are perhaps more sought after, more eagerly awaited than any we have mentioned. Those are the galaxy of "women's magazine writers," the "popular" fictioneers. Let a few stand for the many: Kathleen Norris, Margaret Culkin Banning, Temple Bailey. There are many, many more. They swell the list of women fiction writers; they are prodigiously successful; therefore they are important. One cannot separate those two considerations. They must be carefully considered.

ONCE inside the barrier of fiction we are in a wide and varied field. Every one is familiar with the clichés —serious or important fiction and the ordinary or popular fiction. The difference is that those who wish to be recognized as "intelligent" or aspire to be "in the know" accept and applaud the serious sort, the popular is left for the "lower orders." Nevertheless, when all fiction is considered it is seen to be of various sorts—as to subject matter and styles: they are all, essentially, serious.

Take first the popular novel as exemplified by the writing of those women we have mentioned. Here we have the straightforward wish fulfilment, the waking dream. These books deal always and regularly with a single theme—love and its supposed vicissitudes. This is unabashed sentimentality. It makes up the bulk of women's magazine fiction and causes all "decent" folk to shudder. It is unmarred by serious or saddening thought; every suggestion of storm turns out to be merest passing inconvenience; all suffering purifies and purges and there is without fail the final lovers' meetings and promise of eternal bliss amid chords from the great organ. No slightest tinge of reality is permitted to sully these pages. Although all the talk is of love, there is in fact no evidence of any real understanding of man's terrible strivings to find love, to understand it in himself, or of his recurrently tragic loss.

These are straight fairy stories, they mirror the longings of the popular mind for just such easy and sure gratification. They follow the formula: through repeated dangers and threats to the absolute golden dream. But of course the fairy story is entirely different (it will be said) in its real purity and worth. This is no doubt true. The fairy story is closer to man's unconscious; it is all symbolism and therefore capable of a thousand glittering transformations. It emerges from the days of man's innocence before heroes could be less than king's sons, even if in disguise, and heroines, princesses. But however daintily we try to slice it we must come to the recognition of the similarity of these two expressions. The latter-day fairy story is as avidly read and sought after as ever the fairy tale was listened to.

NOWADAYS, these tales belong pretty much in the woman writer's bailiwick. Why? Certainly it cannot be said that they are *forced* upon a reluctant public. Perhaps there is here, as in the story tellers of the past, a simple wish to provide the answer to the wishes and dreams of millions. Much if not all of this kind of thing is formularized and ought to be easily done by anyone who takes the trouble to investigate the formula. And yet I suspect it is not so. Else we should have more of it than we do and almost every high-school girl graduate would be sure of immortality in the world of the slicks. In doing this there cannot be *too* much tongue in cheek or the audience will detect the insincerity and the jig will be up. The writer must participate in the reader's belief in the tale she is telling, must be somehow caught in the fantasy too. Certainly one cannot neglect the idea that the promise of rich emoluments has much to do in inducing the ladies to turn out their shameless spate. Hollywood is frenetically watchful for every new twist (or old one) to the perennial tales of love.

This may be cynicism and no doubt some of it is. But beyond that there is the matching of story to need. These are the simple daydreams of the prince who comes riding, a castle (tiny cottage with the picket fence), and a carriage (Ford) in which to ride about dressed in golden splendor. The people will have their story tellers and since our society is one in which there is a vast overall tendency to cheapen and find the thing "you can't tell from a real one" or the ersatz which is "just as good," in which stereotypy is dear to everyone's heart and cheapness a universal good, we can scarcely wonder if our story tellers tell those tales which match the times. Since so much of this writing is for women who have the empty hours to fill and who are lonely and hungry for the dreams of their youth, we cannot expect that they will be satisfied unless those dreams are fulfilled and in their own terms. They are the rulers and they have their bards and those bards are committed to pleasing them for the rich rewards of acceptance and money.

Beyond their sisters of the fairy

(*Continued on page* 29)

"I understand that many of these divorces ripen into lasting friendships."

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Dazzling Disintegration

UNDER THE VOLCANO. By Malcolm Lowry. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947. 375 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JOHN WOODBURN

WHEN I had finished reading this book for the first time I could not bring myself to set down what I thought of it. I was so much within its grasp, so profoundly affected by the tides of its prose, the faltering arc of its tragic design, a design which gave me the feeling of wonder and beauty and fear, of melancholy and loneliness, the indescribable loneliness I have always felt at seeing a falling star describe its incorrigibe curve of disintegration across the face of night, that I said to myself: you are this book's fool, it has stolen you and mastered you by some trickery, and you cannot appraise it tranquilly until it leaves you alone. It has not let me alone. In the street, in my room, where it has set its sorrowful music to the metronome of my clock, in the company of many or only one, it has been with me insistently. I have now read it twice, and the second time has bound me to it more tightly than before. For it added to the pleasures of anticipation and recollection the puzzle-pleasure, the story has extended itself as do the drawings of shaded cubes which first seem but four, then, miraculously, eight, and then, incredibly, sixteen. It led me to unravel the skeins of inference and nuance, and the swift *agenbite of inwit* of which Joyce was the cool master and Malcolm Lowry his apt, not aping, creative pupil. Many of these I passed over at first reading, caught as I was in the undertow of its emotion; but the second, returning time, there was still the emotion but it was not the same. I knew it would come, and when, and I could await it; so I had time to wander and watch, and it was then that the esthetics became clear, and the intricate, convoluted architecture was articulated. The first reading was the reading of impact, the war-head; the second was the reading of exploration and discovery, in which the feathering of the arrow is observed, when each of the thin laminae becomes distinct, and the myriad references and cross-references of the book fall into symmetry, and what I had sometimes skimmed as casual detail took on exquisite relevance.

The story itself is dolorous and simple; its complexities are in its radiations. It begins in 1939, in November, near sunset on the Day of the Dead, in Quauhnahuac, in Mexico. Two melancholy, tired, and sensitive men, a Frenchman about to return to France and a Mexican doctor going nowhere, talk, over their anís, of a man whom they have not seen for exactly a year: Geoffrey Firmin, once British Consul, compulsive alcoholic, wanderer within himself, an elegant, disintegrating, pitiable, and appealing symbol of self-destruction. Dr. Vigil has known the Consul for an evening; Jacques Laurelle has shared Geoffrey's boyhood and his wife. As Laruelle walks townward from the Casino in the failing light, he recalls disquietly the events of that day one year before and, inducing still more an already oppressive melancholy, remembers the shy, coltish year at Leasowe with the Consul, in England when they were boys. This chapter, which has a deep sombreness and great beauty, is of the first importance to the reader, being a sort of epilogue in prologue-place, and containing, as it does, the unobtrusive clues to the story. It is in this chapter that the small tapers are lit which illumine the subsequent narrative. This chapter at once ends itself and begins the story of that day a year before, with a magnificent sentence of elision: "Over the town, in the dark, tempestuous night, backwards revolved the luminous wheel . . ."

It is 1938, the morning of the Day of the Dead. The Consul, who has not slept, sits in a *cantina*, precisely, deliberately sustaining his alcoholic euphoria. The little foxes of remorse and failure which gnaw at his vitals are drowsy with grape. His wife, Yvonne, whom he loves helplessly and who has left and divorced him and gone to America, appears suddenly, unbelievably in the doorway. A little way down the street is the rococo house of M. Laruelle, who has been her lover, and on whose wall is inscribed, as the Consul remembers bitterly, *No se*

THE AUTHOR: Malcolm Lowry was born at Merseyside, England, on the 28th of July 1909, the son of a cotton broker and the grandson of a windjamming sea captain. From his tenth to his fourteenth year he was isolated from reading, writing, and playing games by chronic ulceration of the cornea of both eyes. After a successful operation he went to Leys School, Cambridge, where his housemaster was W. H. Balgarnie, the original Mr. Chips. He took up golf and became a junior champion. Inspired by Eugene O'Neill he left school and worked his way to China on a sailing ship. Returning to England he became enthusiastic over the work of Conrad Aiken and made a trip to Massachusetts to meet the poet. In 1929 he entered Cambridge University; in 1932 he was graduated. That year the manuscript of his first novel, after being accepted by a London firm, was lost when an editor's suitcase was stolen. No carbon copy existed but in three months the author rewrote the novel and it was published. He went to France and then came to the United States. Here he wrote, between visits to Mexico, three novels, one of them "Under the Volcano." All three were rejected. In Canada, where in 1939 he went to make his permanent home, all three were rewritten and again rejected. He began a third version of "Under the Volcano." Meanwhile his house burned down. The manuscript was completed on Christmas Eve 1944, in the bar of a pub on Lake Ontario. When it was finished the author began to rebuild his house with his own hands, plus the hands of his wife. Exhausted from the effort the two went to Mexico for a rest. There the news reached them of the simultaneous acceptance in England and America of the final draft of "Under the Volcano." Mrs. Lowry is Margerie Bonner, herself a writer.

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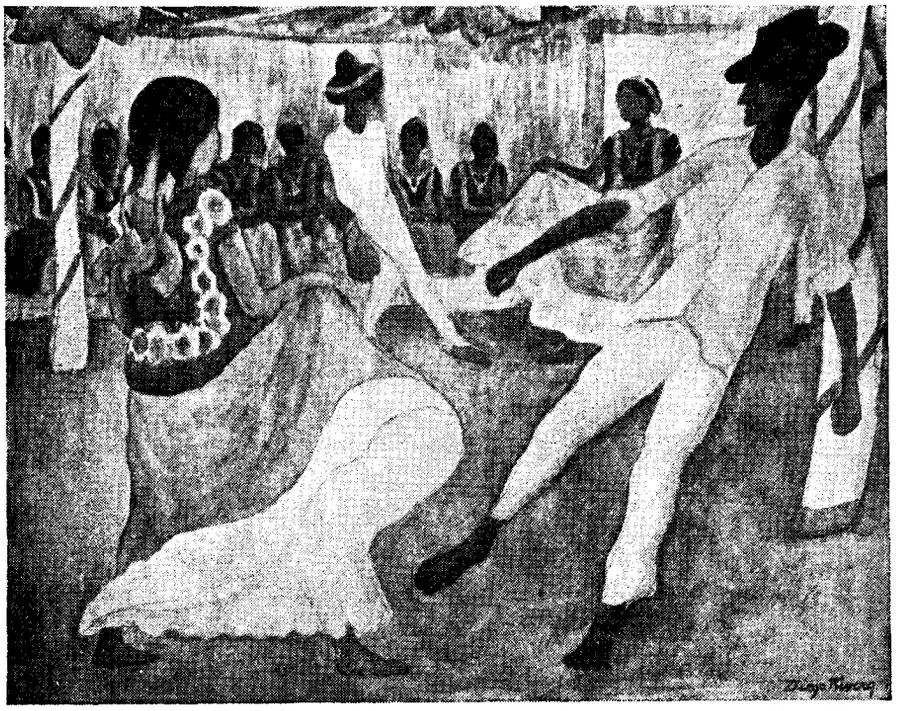

—*Diego Rivera.*

Sandunga

puede vivir sin amar. And arriving that day is Hugh, the Consul's younger half-brother, a Leftist journalist, troubled at leaving Spain without sharing her agony. And from this moment, as the Consul's grasp tightens on his glass and his tenuous hold on reality relaxes—slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, the events of that day begin to arrange themselves into a pattern of doom.

Involuted and radiant, the terror and beauty and chaos of that day are not to be told, can only be awkwardly suggested. Through the fevered, credible dazzle of the Consul's conversation, above his flights of free association, there is a kind of silent agony, of a wild crying unheard, so that one feels that, behind the brittle, brilliant words which divert and assure, a man is falling, turning, tumbling, falling into space.

I tell you, I cannot stop thinking of this book; of the sweet morning ride in the light, cool air, before the heat, the mares followed by the gracile foals; of the dying man lying by the roadside, the horse, already ominous, standing beside him; the swift, symbolic tropical storm, and the odorous jungle; and the scene, like a bright nightmare, in the crowded cantina, at the book's ending, when the Consul finds that all the days of his life have led to that swarming room.

I do not mean to imply that "Under the Volcano" is immaculate of flaws. I do not quite believe in Yvonne, not that she is false, but that she is given obliquely, and Lowry seems strangely to have neglected her. Hugh, who is the Consul's *alter ego,* comes alive for me wholly only in the scene in the bull-ring. I accept the dramatic device of the behavior of the horse in the storm, while I misdoubt its natural probability. But these are so little wrong where so much is so wonderfully right.

There will, I suppose, be the expected comparisons with Jackson, Hemingway, Wolfe. With "The Lost Weekend" only because it deals with the tyranny of the grape. True, it is about alcoholism in Mexico, as a friend of mine said, but it is also true that "Ulysses" is about neuroticism in Dublin. In any comparison with "The Lost Weekend," and I do not wish to denegate Mr. Jackson's achievement, Malcolm Lowry emerges as an artist, to say the least, and Charles Jackson, to say the most, as an able writer. As for "The Sun Also Rises," it was good in its time, but this book would have bettered it then, and it is better, far better, now. Lowry has Wolfe's wild eloquence and bravura, but more grace and discipline and more compassion. On page 37 there is a sentence which is 32 lines long and does not falter in its music and can be read aloud without burdening the breath, and that is more than Wolfe ever did for me. Malcolm Lowry has created his own *genre,* and bent it to his will. He is Joyce's own child, there is no doubt, but he is also his own man, an original. There are going to be a lot of new monkeys around now, I tell you, and you will recognize them. They are the ones Malcolm Lowry has made out of some of his contemporaries, the ones who have become our complacent idols, whom we have saluted as truly McCovian, and I feel sorry for them, in their tottering ivory towers or wherever they may be; because they are going to have to go back to their typewriters and start writing with their heads and their hearts and their jolly old genes, the way he does, if they wish to stand beside the author of this book. Some of them won't like this novel, and they'll say so, but they will have to admit to themselves that here is a man who can write a prose that is like wine, who can make the English language serve him like a slave. Otherwise, they had better start ignoring such positive phenomena as wind and storm and the bright veins of lightning in the sky.

I have never before used the word in a review, and I am aware of the responsibility upon me in using it, but I am of the opinion, carefully considered, that "Under the Volcano" is a work of genius.

Ladies and gentlemen: this magnificent, tragic, compassionate, and beautiful book—and my neck.

John Woodburn was born in Towanda, Pennsylvania, and educated at Princeton University. For the past ten years he has been engaged in editorial work in publishing in New York City.

Bay Window Ballad

By Mark Van Doren

THE old man in the window,
With his hair all combed,
The old man in the window
Will drive no more.

He watches down the valley,
In his collar and clean cuffs,
He watches down the valley
As the teams come up.

There, by the big rock,
Seventy Junes ago,
There, by the big rock,
He tipped his load.

How the old one scolded,
The old one who is gone;
But that old, old one
Never was young;

Never at this window,
With his face all washed,
Never at this window
Tapped the glass.

Tap! and the great roans
Answer with their feet;
Tap! and a grandson
Whirls his hat.

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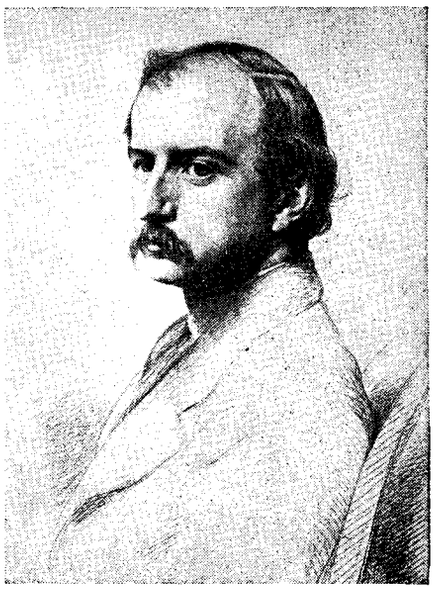
Henry Adams: Man of Letters

ROBERT E. SPILLER



—*Samuel Laurence [1868].*

Henry Adams's major works "formed a kind of Bible for the disillusioned generation following the First World War."

SLOWLY Henry Adams is becoming a major figure in American literature. When the "Education" appeared posthumously in 1918, its author was a personality shrouded in a mystery which the book did little to dispel. The historians rushed to review what appeared to be his autobiography, and their judgment of it and of its somewhat captious historical speculations has persisted because its author's esthetic purposes were but dimly recognized. Because literature demands a sense of personality and because Adams hid behind the third-personal pronoun, his notion that he was but himself a symbol of force and his story an exploration of the meaning of his time escaped critical attention.

For his generation the fame of Henry Adams rested chiefly on his "History of the United States," and on his blue-blooded ancestry. Because his grandfather and his great-grandfather had been Presidents, it seemed obvious to him that he, like his father, should at least go into diplomacy, but he was not temperamentally fitted for a life of action. Instead, a born scholar, he had turned to the writing of history, and had spent the first half of his life looking for a key to the meaning of experience in public and private documents. When that method failed and the death of his wife taught him that his emotions could be even more trusted than his mind, he became in fact what he had always wanted to be, a man of letters.

But before 1900 he was immersed in his "History,"* and his imagination had not yet torn itself loose from its moorings. It is good to have a new shortened version of this classic study of the administrations of Jefferson and Madison, but little more need be said about it here, except to note that in this abbreviated version Mr. Herbert Agar has reduced the original nine volumes to a third of their length by leaving out all the footnotes and many of the quotations from source material. But the revealing comments by Adams on the scene he is describing have been preserved almost intact; in looking over these volumes, moreover, one is reminded anew that the "History" has more literary art in its pages than most critics have managed to discover.

Adams as a man of letters and as a literary personality lay hidden for his own generation behind the façade of his "History." It was through the publication of many of his letters that he began to be revealed to us as a truly great literary figure as well as an historian. In the 1930's Worthington C. Ford published two volumes of his letters which not only established Adams as the most accomplished letter writer of his day but brought to light many of the biographical facts which made the "Education" and the "Chartres," products of the fullest development of his literary imagination, intelligible as something more than history. But Mr. Ford respected too conscientiously Henry Adams's reserve, and his books omitted the more personal revelations made in the lighter and more intimate letters to his nieces and to his friends, his "nieces in wishes." Except for a small volume of selected letters to Mabel La Farge, this warmer side of Adams's personality had been hidden until Harold Dean Cater, another historian, collected some 650 letters and an unpublished introduction to the essay on "The Rule of Phase as Applied to History." Few facts are added by this volume,* but many assumptions of the critics are verified or corrected. Yet the book as a whole is more important than are any of its parts. In it, the stature of Henry Adams as man and as artist grows immeasurably with the cumulative effect of his words. He is now alive for us as few American authors have allowed themselves to be.

Because we know Adams now so well, it is somewhat disappointing to discover that Mr. Cater does not use the new material to provide a reappraisal of the author of the "Education." He is content with a narrative introduction and factual notes, helpful in identifying people and confirming dates and places, but in themselves not at all illuminating. The temptation is therefore strong to take this greatest imaginative mind of the American *fin de siècle* away from his historical friends; for Henry Adams was at heart an artist first, an historian second. With our new knowledge of the man himself, it is possible to make much clearer his esthetic intentions and achievements.

The education of Henry Adams began in 1838 and ended in 1918. According to his own account, it was a failure because life had not yielded up to him its secret. A product of an eighteenth-century world, he felt unprepared for a twentieth; destiny was moving too fast to be comprehended in a single life. From the writing of history to the more personal forms of expression developed late in life in his "Chartres" and "Education," Adams moved restlessly forward in his search for the meaning of experience. To the historian of literature, the pattern is a familiar one. No really great writer ever "succeeded" in his private life; every truly great masterpiece has been "unfinished" in the eyes of its creator. By its very nature, great art asks rather than answers questions. The only mystery in the case of Henry Adams is that we have been so slow in recognizing one of our all-too-few master artists. He is one of the dozen or so major figures in the literary history of the United States.

SUCH a claim cannot rest on the literary excellence of his "History of the United States," nor on his two professedly literary works, the novels "Democracy" and "Esther," which he published anonymously back in the eighties and refused ever to claim as his own. None of these books is unworthy of him, but none rises much above the level of unusually good writing. In his later years, when his imagination finally flowered, he could admit at last "that his great ambition was to complete St. Augustine's 'Confessions,'" but that "the point on

THE FORMATIVE YEARS: A History of the United States during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison, by Henry Adams. Condensed and Edited by Herbert Agar. Two Vols. Illustrated by Maps. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 1030 pp. $10.

HENRY ADAMS AND HIS FRIENDS: A Collection of His Unpublished Letters. Compiled, with a biographical introduction, by Harold Dean Cater. Illustrated with photographs. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947 cxix + 797 pp. $7.50.

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which the author failed to please himself, and could get no light from readers or friends, was the usual one of literary form."

"The Education of Henry Adams" and "Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres" are the major works of this scion of America's most nearly royal family. They are two of the most studied and discussed works in our literature, and yet their right to be considered as literature has been ignored if not denied. The social and art historians criticized them first and have continued to exercise a sort of proprietary right over them ever since they were privately printed in the early years of the century. Their faults and their virtues have been presumably settled in these terms. Yet they formed a kind of Bible for the disillusioned generation following the First World War, and thousands have found in them a voice that speaks directly from the soul of the author to that of the reader. They transcend their critics in a most annoying fashion.

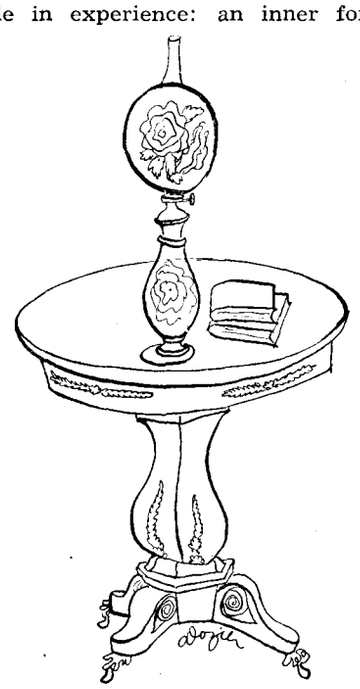
PART of the fault is Adams's own because he addressed his challenge first to the historians in a memorable address before the American Historical Association. He told them that the past could not be understood by merely being recorded. Until history could find in science a formula of interpretation, the writing of history would continue to be a vain pursuit. Even he did not know then that not only science but art was needed. No one has seemed to notice that in the preface which he carefully wrote for the "Education," and asked his former student Henry Cabot Lodge to sign, he declared that in conception his two great books formed a single work of art. But the discovery of a scientific formula with which to work was the first need. From the day of his address forward, his energies were devoted to the search for that formula rather than to the writing of history itself according to established premises and rules. Although he does not seem fully to have appreciated the fact, such a quest was as romantic as those of Ahab for Moby Dick or Parsifal for the Holy Grail. As in those cases, it became a search for the symbol of the life force, an effort to wrest the meaning of man from a reluctant nature by sheer violence. The discovery of a new and scientific basis for history would mean the creation of a new religion.

The task of Adams's generation was not the completion of that creation. Rather they were to break down old structures by techniques which science had given them, to define issues, to set up working hypotheses for the new synthesis. Adams took as his particular task the discovery of an organic esthetic form which could give expression to the significance of his age as he saw it. He proceeded direct from the experience to the expression because he had rejected all models. The result was the single gigantic but incompleted act of the imagination which resulted in the "Chartres" and the "Education."

The final chapters of the "Education" expound briefly the "dynamic" theory of history which Adams had adopted as his tentative instrument, a theory which is more fully expounded in "A Letter to American Teachers of History." The choice of the second law of thermodynamics, the law of dissipation of energy, as the needed formula, was dictated by the stage to which physical science had developed by 1910. If the attempt were made today, Adams might equally well have adopted the law of relativity and developed a science of history in quite other terms. To him the important factor was the relation of the two components, science and history, to each other, not the final truth of the findings of either one. In the later and even more daring essay on the law of phase, he allows his imagination such range as to venture by computation to fix a date for the moment of dissolution. Impatience with the rapid progress of science and the stodgy conservatism of historians provoked heroic measures.

Adams's version of the more fully developed theory of entropy which he adopted for his two major literary works may, for convenience, be stated as two related hypotheses:

(1) Accepting force as ultimate fact, two kinds of force are recognizable in experience: an inner force



which makes for unity and which man has traditionally known as religion or God, and an outer force which makes for multiplicity and which has come to be known as science or Nature. Absolutely considered, both these forces may be traced to a common center in a mechanistic view of the universe, as in the past both were traced to a theistic center, but in human experience they have always been and probably always will be differentiated and in opposition to each other. This is no more than a restatement in modern terms of the classic theory of metaphysical dualism.

(2) Historically considered, experience shows that man reached the peak of his development in the era of medieval Christianity because he then succeeded through the instrument of the Church in attaining the highest degree of unity; but the discovery of the inductive method of reasoning and its application to physical science in modern times introduced a new "phase" of evolution in which nature supplants man as dynamic center of the universe. Unity was then mortally challenged and the universe began to move toward disintegration by a law of accelerated entropy which should by now be reaching its culmination and which should be followed by complete dissolution or by new and unpredictable forms of life. Thus the historical framework is provided for the application of the theory of dualism.

THESE two hypotheses are complementary when treated in purely intellectual terms, but they present a fundamental inconsistency when viewed in the light of emotion. Adams thus also creates, perhaps unwittingly, a dichotomy between intellect and emotion which supplies the pattern for his art form, but which destroys the validity of his theory as an instrument for the logical explanation of the universe. Art alone could resolve this inconsistency because art records and evaluates rather than accounts for the evidence of experience.

Adams's creation of an arbitrary cosmology for his purposes suggests Milton's similar acceptance of the Ptolemaic system at a time when his own reason might have dictated the Copernican. His acceptance of a modified Newtonian mechanism is a necessary premise to his artistic construction, and its degree of logical soundness has no bearing on its esthetic validity. It was many years before Miltonic criticism could free itself from this difficulty and accept "Paradise Lost" as a great epic poem

(*Continued on page* 33)

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Homogenized Lincolniana

THE LINCOLN READER. Edited by Paul M. Angle. New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press. 1947. 539 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE FORT MILTON

MR. ANGLE'S latest contribution to Lincoln literature should be welcomed both by the Lincoln legion, perhaps the country's most pertinacious booklovers, and by an even wider general readership than its choice by the Book-of-the-Month Club has assured. Furthermore, it deserves attentive reading, inasmuch as it illuminates significant segments of the Emancipator's career, some of which suggest the analogy between the problems Lincoln bequeathed Vice President Andrew Johnson and those Mr. Roosevelt's death dumped in President Truman's lap.

The publishers go a little out of bounds, however, when they blurb the book as "the *only* complete and authentic retelling of the saga of the life and times of Lincoln in one volume." There is, of course, no question of its authenticity, for Paul Angle is a noted authority on Lincoln, whom many deem as outstanding a Lincoln scholar as Professor James G. Randall. Nor is there any question that he has made a reasonably representative selection from sixty-five among the innumerable sources on the Lincoln period, selections that repay reading.

Nonetheless, this is a "reader," not a biography or a history, and even a reader done with the artistry and scholarship Editor Angle has so patently devoted to this one is, of necessity, a hodge-podge, with the defects of the qualities of its mosaic form. Unity, coherence, and emphasis are the very essence of cogent communication; and while a man as learned in Lincoln lore as Mr. Angle has little difficulty in imposing the emphasis he wishes his selections to convey, the very variety of literary styles among the three-score-and-five sources he drew upon makes coherence difficult and unity almost impossible.

That this is the case is not Mr. Angle's fault. As a matter of fact, he invented or adapted a method of "homogenizing" his selections that to a fair degree disguises the volume's conglomerate character. This is through devoting each of the twenty-four chapters to a single rung of Lincoln's long climb up the ladder to immortality. As a result, each is at least tangent to unity of subject-matter, although there are many gaps within single chapters when the mortise work is incomplete.

The Emancipation chapter exemplifies Mr. Angle's method. A prologue in italics summarizes Lincoln's First Inaugural statement of his then attitude toward slavery; mentions his timely rebukes to Fremont and Hunter and his famous letter to Greeley; suggests why he concluded in June 1862 that freeing some slaves in the South would aid the Union cause. Then comes a brief identification of the source of the first selection, the identifier being set in a different type size and style from the text being introduced.

Superintendent of Military Telegraph Eckert, whose office the President haunted for news and solace, recounts that shortly after the Seven Days' Battle Lincoln asked him for some foolscap "to write something special," and how he would write a line or two and then ponder. Angle then bridges to Welles's diary entry June 13 that the President had confided to Seward and himself the conclusion that Emancipation was necessary for military success. The Cabinet's reaction to the proclamation draft is taken from the account Francis B. Carpenter elicited from Lincoln the next year during the painting of the signature of the immortal document.

An excerpt from Lincoln's yes-and-no pre-Antietam remarks to a religious delegation soliciting a proclamation is inserted to show his caution in publicizing a still "iffy" proposition. Then comes Chase's account of the post-Antietam Cabinet where Seward's sage, strengthening suggestions were adopted. Nicolay and Hay contribute the final scene: the White House on New Year's Day 1863, when Lincoln signed the second and final proclamation that slaves in Confederate-held territory were thenceforward "forever free."

Each of these hunks of history is interesting or important or both. The chapter should communicate to the peruser a considerable understanding of the conflict of psychic, political, and strategical forces Lincoln faced in making his decision. But it is not a "complete" retelling of the Emancipation Proclamation saga. The other twenty-three chapters exhibit similar qualities and defects.

Mr. Angle is temperate in most of his comments on the motives of the men Lincoln fought in his long struggle for power. Yet in introducing the chapter on the Great Debates, he indicts the 1858 Stephen A. Douglas as "a morally insensitive politician"! This accusation seems to me a needless and unjustified slur against a statesman as devoted to saving the Union as Lincoln himself.

Dispassionately weighing the arguments from Ottawa to Alton, Professor Randall properly points out that Douglas didn't take one position and Lincoln an opposite one. Although each sought to impale the other on barbed questions, actually they differed only on the prohibition of slavery in all the national territories. Even here, he says, "The difference was not vital in its practical effect upon results. . . . Lincoln's demand of Congressional prohibition for slavery would produce freedom, but so also would Douglas's principle of popular sovereignty honestly applied." He adds that Douglas suffered because of "his own forthright courage in expounding an interpretation of popular sovereignty which would favor freedom where people wished it." This certainly does not suggest the Little Giant was "morally insensitive."

The epilogue from Lord Charnwood which concludes the reader is full of charm. I cannot help regretting, however, that Mr. Angle did not avail himself of President Wilson's magnificent passages at the Hodgenville dedication, the finest estimate I know of the change and growth of this child of the cabin who kept the Union whole.

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Cuba, the Key

CUBA. By Erna Fergusson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1946. 308 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by CARLETON BEALS

CUBA was the key, the base, for Spain's conquest of the larger part of the Americas. It is the key to the Caribbean and the Panama Canal, and United States security. What the United States Government does (or doesn't do) in Cuba is watched closely by the rest of Latin America, so that often it is the key to good-neighborliness for a continent and a half. It is also the key to the United States sugar pantry and to our radio crooning about good cigars. Miss Fergusson might also have mentioned that its deposits of strategic manganese, on which so much American money was spent for the benefit of victory and sundry corporations, are something of a key, and that its billions of tons of untouched iron ore may someday also be exceedingly important.

Quite apart from the international scene, Cuba holds the key to many fine things in its warm culture and unique traditions: a special love of liberty and individual human rights, built by its century-long struggle for independence and pointed up by the ideas and efforts of the great José Marti; its freedom from all racial prejudice; its inter-race system of peace and fairness. Other old locks are turning and doors opening, and Miss Fergusson peeks in for the benefit of United Statesers (Cubans are Americans, too) who know less (and probably care less) about one of the nearest and most vital countries of the hemisphere than they do about baseball scores.

For quite some years now, Miss Fergusson has been making her own map of the Americas: two books on our Southwest, one on Hawaii, one each on Mexico, Guatemala, Chile, Venezuela, and now Cuba. All have been sprightly, readable books. Her initial interest was folkloric, and her human sympathy, love of color, careful observation, and indefatigable willingness to go off the beaten track, regardless of any physical discomforts, give her books a tang and truthfulness quite rare. They have been casual and chatty, perfect cocktails for the afternoon veranda, properly flavored with a dash of political bitters, a curl of lemon-peel history, the olive (not the whole branch) of social relationships.

But here in "Cuba," the most topical of her books to date, she handles all her themes with competent assurance. Many readers may not like all her conclusions—for she is here a walking (and signed) edition of the Atlantic Charter—but, without doubt, this is the best of her books. It is full bodied and has dimension. Without sacrificing her previous methods, she has expanded them to cover almost everything of drama, color, and background to be found in Cuba. Her chattiness is here more selective and, in her disarming fashion, she is deeper and more discerning.

Her researching into the lack of truth of the silly Elbert Hubbard "Message to Garcia" and her discovery of the real story, was worth $3.75 to me; so was the warm pathos of the hurricane-wracked school in Matanzas. There is pathos, too, in her account of the unfinished tubercular hospital of Batista. She is a General Wood versus a General Brooke partisan, which is a worthy choice between two necessary evils. She doesn't tread too heavily on the Teddy Roosevelt myths or rehash "the *Merrimac* and the Merrysmack" business. Her brief glimpses into our war with Spain can well be supplemented by reading Walter Millis's "The Martial Spirit." And in fact this is one of the virtues of Miss Fergusson's book: it should whet the appetite of even the average reader to delve into the rich and exciting story of Cuban history and life.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

DING-DONG BELL

A. C. Palmer, of Pomfret Center, Connecticut, offers twenty quotations about bells and asks you to match them with the poets who wrote them. Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers on page 26.

1. For a cap and bells our lives we pay, ( ) Arnold
   Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking.
2. The bell strikes one. We take no note of time ( ) Byron
   But from its loss
3. Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells! ( ) Coleridge
4. Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus ( ) Dickens
   sounded.
5. Children dear, was it yesterday ( ) Fr. Prout
   We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
6. Those evening bells, those evening bells! ( ) Gilbert
   How many a tale their music tells.
7. That all-softening, overpowering knell, ( ) Harte
   The tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell.
8. O bells that die, so far, so nigh, ( ) Housman
   Come back once more across the sea.
9. And hark the little vesper-bell, ( ) Hood
   Which biddeth me to prayer!
10. The bells they sound on Bredon, ( ) Keats
    And still the steeples hum.
11. Twilight and evening bell, ( ) Kipling
    And after that the dark.
12. They went and told the sexton, and ( ) Longfellow
    The sexton tolled the bell.
13. I've heard bells chiming full many a clime in, ( ) Lowell
    Tolling sublime in cathedral shrine.
14. And now the bell, the bell she had so often heard by ( ) Moore
    night and day . . . rang its remorseless toll for her.
15. For the temple bells are callin' an' it's there that I ( ) Poe
    would be.
16. Hear the mellow wedding bells, Golden bells! ( ) Shakespeare
17. Forlorn! the very word is like a bell ( ) Tennyson
    To toll me back from these to my sole self!
18. Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh. ( ) Thackeray
19. Ring the merry bells on board ship, ( ) Whitman
    Rend the air with warblings wild.
20. The play is done—the curtain drops, ( ) Young
    Slow falling to the prompter's bell.

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Rulers of America's Press

AN AMERICAN DYNASTY: The Story of the McCormicks, Medills and Pattersons. By John Tebbel. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 363 pp. $3.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

A GOOD many Americans, most of them indignantly critical of the McCormick-Patterson newspapers of Chicago, New York, and Washington, have been eager for such a source book on the McCormick-Patterson record as this one. They now have a book which seems at the same time strongly critical and determinedly honest. But they have more than that. Mr. Tebbel not only documents the defects and the virtues of Joseph Medill's journalistic descendants. Also, in them, I think, he has traced the development in America of the peculiar and powerful press lords who keep the irascible and irresponsible, self-righteous individualism of the old-time editor in a time of multiplied and monopolized power.

In effect Mr. Tebbel has personalized the plight of a free press in America which is sometimes embarrassed most by those who most stridently defend it. Despite the formularized radical attack on the capitalistic press, that embarrassment arises from no mere publishing for pure profit. The worst maladies of the free press are not caused by cheap hucksters debauching news for advertising. The most serious disease of the American press occurs when those whose power has grown with their profits make their papers the expression of their own aristocratic eccentricities. Hearst, Gannett, Roy Howard, and others are examples of the disease. But the Pattersons and McCormicks and their *Chicago Tribune* as dissected by Mr. Tebbel here are undoubtedly the best clinical specimens of this pathology of the press in the increasing concentration of its control.

Mr. Tebbel traces the editorial eccentricity and irresponsibility of his subjects biologically to the "stubborn, aggressive, eccentric" McCormicks and the "wilful, aristocratic, domineering" Medills. The strains were certainly there. But the McCormick-Patterson phenomenon seems less well explained by ancestry than by current cousinship with some other men like them in the control of our press. Mr. Tebbel does not convince me that the McCormick-Pattersons are the worst of them. He gives them credit for creative—or at least popular—developments in the press of our time. He shows them as aristocrats whose paternalism at least has about it none of the miserliness in pay checks which sometimes seems to have accompanied the magnificence of Hearst.

Indeed, as Lords of the Press, they make the others look like *parvenus*. Roy Howard still dresses and acts among the press lords like a police reporter who has just suddenly and unexpectedly had his pay doubled and had added snarling ideas to his snappy wardrobe. His reaction is as loud as his suits. Gannett has let himself become a sweating, screaming part of the lunatic fringe of reaction while McCormick seems aloof even from those who share his insanities. In faults and virtues certainly, Colonel McCormick is the grand duke beside whom even Hearst seems only an aging and gaudy maharaja. Even in the depression McCormick made money while it took a war to bail Hearst out. Only occasionally has McCormick looked really funny in public. Once during the war, however, when his paper's policy seemed remarkably close to Hitler's propaganda line, he wrote a solemn and romantic letter about what he had done for America. It got into both print and public laughter and won the comic accolade of Carl Sandburg's comment: "And on the seventh day he rested."

There is a godlike quality about the *Chicago Tribune's* Colonel even if it is better expressed by the phrase "playing god." Few people in history have been better equipped to play it. If it were not so serious, it would be, of course, a comic process even in a press lord. Mr. Tebbel's documentation of the process in vanity, peevishness, news distortion, persecution, defamation, and something very close to giving aid and comfort to the enemy in time of war throws a light on more press lords than the Colonel. It also hangs at least a little cloud in the clear sky above much confident current American talk about the certain superiority of the free press in the United States.

Mr. Tebbel's book points such general dangers. But he writes within the specific frame of his Patterson-McCormick family. He has examined all its fuzzy edges and some of its odd members. He gives special attention to Eleanor "Sissy" Patterson, of *The Washington Times-Herald*, and the late Joseph Medill Patterson, of *The New York Daily News*. But his prize portrait is of Colonel McCormick in his tower office without visible doors. It is a place where the sinister and the comic somehow merge.

Under that office is a newspaper story which certainly was never dull from the time of Lincoln whom Joseph Medill did not quite trust to Franklin Roosevelt whom Robert McCormick hated to incoherency. It includes such famous working newspapermen as James Keeley as well as Pattersons, McCormicks, and Medills. Newspapermen will delight in the story, and people who are only newspaper readers will find in it facts about modern American journalism without which modern American newspapers cannot be read with understanding. They will find those facts in revealing exaggeration on the *Tribune*.

Sometimes I felt that Mr. Tebbel's efforts to make the record and make it beyond serious dispute had led him to an excess of documentation. If that sometimes slows the story, it certainly supports it. Colonel McCormick will not like many of Mr. Tebbel's conclusions. I have a hunch, however, that in his lonely tower he will not find much wrong with his facts. They are essentially not unflattering though they are remorselessly revealing. From them the Colonel emerges as almost the epitome of the American press lord, and the Colonel certainly has never argued about that.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 673)

THOMAS HEGGEN:
MISTER ROBERTS

Apply the rubber hammer to the patella tendon and, commonly, you produce the knee jerk. . . . Like the knee jerk, physical courage is perhaps latent and even implicit in the individual, needing only the application of situation . . . to reveal it.

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Marxism as a "Living Instrument"

SOVIET PHILOSOPHY. A Study of Theory and Practice. By John Somerville. New York: Philosophical Library. 1946. 269 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by D. FEDOTOFF WHITE

THIS "Dialectics for the Millions" is a very remarkable achievement. To compress within the narrow confines of the volume a clear, comprehensive exposition of the intricacies of the Soviet *Weltanschauung* is no mean feat.

The author is very well equipped for his task. He is familiar with the Russian language and has spent nearly two full years in the USSR, gathering material for his book.

The aim and scope of the volume are defined by Dr. Somerville as the exposition of Soviet philosophy, "not a polemic against it." He says: "I have tried to make the book true to the content and meaning of a living philosophy as it is found among those who live by it. If that sort of thing is not done with a certain amount of 'sympathy,' it cannot be done at all. It is that kind of task."

I, for one, thoroughly agree with the author that those who say they want to understand the Soviet Union, but will not examine an exposition of its philosophy, are deluding themselves. It is well to remember that "in the Soviet Union philosophy is not looked upon as a purely theoretical enterprise, but as a living instrument with a part to play in the building of a new life."

Dr. Somerville states, very much to the point: "The Soviet citizen not only comes in contact with the *ideas* of a socialist philosophy; he sees it in action around him, lives out its patterns, shares its values, and suffers its mistakes. There is an interpenetration of theory and practice on a scale that is exceptionally huge and bold, although it is sometimes rough and crude."

The volume begins with the examination of the "basic perspective"—the theory of historical materialism, that is, of the Soviet theory of human society in its historic change. Then it proceeds to analyze views on some of the aspects of political life—socialist democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. An exposition of Soviet ethics and philosophy of art complete the first part.

The second opens with a chapter given to the general theory of dialectical materialism, *i.e.*, the Soviet world view, which is followed by an examination of the much talked of, but little understood, dialectical method of thinking. These are complemented by a brief summary of the principal controversies in the field of Soviet philosophy, a description of methods used in the USSR in bringing Soviet philosophy to the people, and concluded by a summary of the basic sources of that philosophy. In line with the general plan of the book, the suggested reading does not comprise any works of criticism of the Leninist-Stalinist school of Marxist thought, nor of Marxism in general.

Dr. Somerville's most important contribution to the understanding of Soviet thought by the layman lies in Chapters III (Soviet Ethics), V (General Theory of Dialectical Materialism), and VI (The Dialectical Method of Thinking). Chapter VII, dealing with the pivotal controversies in the history of Soviet philosophy, is also rewarding. It throws light on the ways of change in the views of the Communist Party on certain important aspects of Marxist philosophy.

Academic philosophers and, particularly, the exponents of the different schools of Marxist thought will probably find a great deal to criticize in these chapters. Nevertheless, to the layman, unable or unwilling to grope his way through the underbrush of Marxian writings without some guidance, these chapters are a real boon.

Other parts of the book are less impressive. The chapter on the theory of historical materialism lacks depth. A naive reader might be left unaware that Lenin's views on social development in Russia underwent a radical change at a certain period of his life.

It does not require much erudition in Marxist lore to see that well-founded objections could be raised to the statement: "The momentous decision, taken in 1927-28 to embark on the first Five-Year Plan, signified the victory of Lenin's and Stalin's policies over Trotsky's." The reading of pages 27, 28, and 29 of Leon Trotsky's "The Revolution Betrayed" might prove useful in this connection.

The chapter on the arts also leaves one dissatisfied. No attempt is made to show that the trend towards the connecting of art with the social life of the country was in evidence long before the advent of Lenin. Speaking of art and literature of Russia in the fifties, Professor Miliukov, in his "Outlines of Russian Culture," said: "Realism in art was made to serve a utilitarian task—that of criticizing the evils of the existing order."

Notwithstanding these flaws, the book is a very useful one. Should some timid reader come to fear this palatable dish of dialectics as a Danaic gift, let him dig out the files of the defunct *Journal of Social Philosophy* for January 1941, and study Professor George S. Pettee's paper on Marxism.

D. Fedotoff White, editor of several Russian periodicals both here and abroad, helped found Russian Review. *He has taught at the University of Moscow and University of Pennsylvania Graduate School.*

The Water Diviner

By Bianca Bradbury

ARAM has no use for city folks
Their smiles are wise and they can smell a hoax
A mile away. They say
No magic underneath a crust of brown
Dry earth can turn a peach crotch down.
The answer's that it does.
A peach stick twists like some live tortured thing.
They see and yet deny—because
They're scared? Well, that's what Aram says.
If some old prophet from the Testament
Came striding down a city's feller's field
And struck a living brook from some dead boulder,
A city man would smile and shrug his shoulder.
If one believed, I think he'd be content,
But that's what ails the world today,
And Aram's growing bitter, growing old,
Searching converts, grumbling, if God
Himself should wield his home-made rod
And tap a stream of gold,
Not one scoffer would remain to pray.

God, and Aram Perkins trailing after,
Accompanied by city slicker laughter.

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Gallic Geniuses Limited

FRENCH PERSONALITIES AND PROBLEMS. By D. W. Brogan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1947. 241 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by JUSTIN O'BRIEN

TO MOST of us Dennis Brogan is known chiefly as the author of those seemingly facile yet penetrating national analyses, "The English People," "The American Character," and "The Free State." In them, as professor of political science at Cambridge and adviser to the BBC, he applied his specialized knowledge of government and his gift of observation to furthering wartime understanding among the English-speaking peoples. But just before the war he had fathered a more serious work entitled "France Under the Republic (1870-1939)," perhaps at once the most informative and objective, certainly for us the most readable, history of contemporary France. In the preface to that book he apologized for having described the development of the French republic only in its community aspects, and added:

> A history of modern France which finds space for the Duc de Broglie, historian and politician, but not for his grandson, the great physicist; for Calmette the journalist and not for his brother, the great pathologist . . . which has room for Zola but not for his schoolfellow Cézanne, for Senator Antonin Proust and not for his kinsman Marcel, obviously cannot pretend to give anything like a complete picture of French activity in this period.

By gathering together in the present work twenty-seven occasional articles, D. W. Brogan has illustrated his development of modern France with studies of some of those individual geniuses who contributed to the growth of her present civilization: Dumas père, Proust, Maurras, Barrès, Jaurès, De Gaulle, together with sketches of some of their lesser aids or disciples: Léon Daudet, Bainville, Pétain, Clemenceau. But the illustration, brilliant as far as it goes, is not complete. One will look in vain for any artists, musicians, or men of science. It would be unfair to expect from this scholar literary studies of such as Malraux, Montherlant, Green, but one is inevitably disappointed not to find interpretations of such *forces* as Bergson, Gide, Valéry, or such social critics as Benda. These problems and personalities are all vivid, real ones and they are brilliantly handled though their choice was dictated by this or that book to review, this or that occasion to commemorate.

Like yours and mine, Mr. Brogan's sympathy lies with Jaurès and Clemenceau against the nationalists and doctrinaires whom he studies with such admirable impartiality that anyone concerned with the growth of modern nationalism or the antecedents of Vichy cannot ignore this book. Throughout, his reliable scholarship is expressed in a highly literate style. That Mr. Brogan is not only a sound scholar but also a most gifted journalist is delightfully apparent in the tightly ironic article on Darlan published only three days after the landing in North Africa. As a statement of the common British attitude at that time nothing could be better. But even when he handles a controversial subject like the Darlan affair or the case for the study of French, he is animated by the same conviction he voiced in 1940 in his history: "Of that Western civilization (of which with all its faults we are unescapably the children) France has been since the time of the 'Chanson de Roland,' the main sword and the main shield. So it is today."

Romance in Commerce

MEN OF ERIE. By Edward Hungerford. New York: Random House. 1946. 346 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by
EVERETT L. DEGOLYER, JR.

THE story of the Erie Railroad is one of the most heartwarming in the history of American business. The managers of this railroad proved their mettle in an unequal and, for a long time, losing battle against seemingly hopeless odds. That they succeeded finally is the ultimate tribute to their merit. It is to Mr. Hungerford's eternal credit that he has been the first to portray this story in its true light.

The Erie Railroad was chartered in 1832, largely by prominent businessmen of the Southern Tier counties of New York. This charter was wrested from the Canal Ring in Albany after a bitter struggle and was hedged about with impossible requirements because of the almost pathological fear of the Northern Counties that some of the traffic of the recently completed Erie Canal would be wrested away by the new enterprise. The railroad was to operate entirely in New York State and was forbidden to connect with any railroads in New Jersey or Pennsylvania. Work was commenced in 1835, but the New York fire of that year and the depression of 1837 put a damper on fund raising and it was not until 1851 that the first train, bearing President Fillmore and Daniel Webster, rolled triumphantly from Piermont on the Hudson River to Dunkirk on Lake Erie.

—*Robin Carson.*

"Edward Hungerford has written an extremely apt book about a much misunderstood subject."

Fancy the difficulties of a railroad originally started in a time of pronounced depression, forbidden connections with other roads, starting fourteen miles out in the sticks from New York City, hitting no centers of population on its entire line, built to an impossible six-foot gauge, and intended to travel on 118 miles of trestle in bottomless swamps! It is small wonder that the Erie went bankrupt with a crash in 1859. After that year, it succumbed to the vampire tendencies of the unholy trinity, Messrs. Gould, Drew, and Fisk, whose reign lasted until 1872.

In the decades following that, the story of the Erie is a succession of men who showed last-ditch determination not to let the railroad die. They had only a road consisting of shaky track, asthmatic locomotives, and a dry treasury. The Erie was kept in operation only by the most stringent penny-pinching and an esprit de corps of unshakable strength. In 1941, meanwhile having been buffeted about by economic disaster followed by economic disaster, the Erie emerged from receivership (its fourth) in a sound, healthy financial condition with a magnificent physical plant. In June 1942, hell froze over

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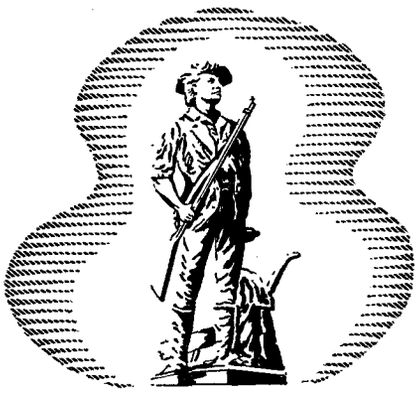
in Wall Street. The Erie paid a dividend on its common stock, the first in sixty-nine years.

Mr. Hungerford has written an extremely apt book about a much misunderstood subject. Despite a tendency to gloss over unpleasantnesses, to oversimplify, and to fail to inquire very deeply into causes and motives, it is certainly one of the most fascinating railroad histories of the last few years. To those who think there is no romance in commerce, it is the perfect rejoinder. It is an expert job by a man who loves and understands his subject and it is indispensable to a working knowledge of American business history.

History and Radio Happily Married

AMERICAN SCRIPTURES. By Carl Van Doren and Carl Carmer. Illustrated. New York: Boni & Gaer. 1946. 301 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS



THE besetting sin of "patriotic" and historical programs for the radio is pretentiousness. To make such programs interesting, the writers have to indulge in more or less dramatization; usually it is more, and when they try to be exciting they become false, when they essay eloquence they achieve bombast. Anyone who has worked in this medium must sympathize with the producers. If the program becomes dull for thirty seconds, half a million listeners snap it off. Hence it is that John Paul Jones strides on deck to sound-effects of swashing waves and rattling muskets, to rant off a scene with some British captain; that Lincoln's pen scratches over the Emancipation Proclamation to the tune of a preposterous exchange with reluctant politicians; that Jackson, Wilson, and Marcus Whitman play their parts with much feverish rhapsody about freedom and justice, fiery trials, and the future of man. Dramatic contrasts of action, wild intensities of rhetoric, thudding hoofbeats, bursts of bugle music, murmurs of crowds—such are the devices to hold attention. Sometimes they succeed; but the usual effect is to disgust the judicious while delighting the adolescent.

This collection of thirty-odd programs on American history written by two men who combine taste with expertness, (the programs were produced in 1943-45 by the United States Rubber Company) shows that windy pathos can easily be avoided—if the radio authors insist on a rigorous simplicity. Not that Messrs. Van Doren and Carmer invariably avoid missteps. They sometimes make crises seem more critical, heroes more heroic, and dreamers more dreamy than sober fact warrants. They sprinkle about adjectives that may have sounded forcible on the air, but look forcible-feeble on the printed page. But in general they show how history and radio-drama can be happily married; how reserve, quietness, and even understatement can be made effective in a noisy field.

This method is to present important, or at any rate telling, utterances of the American past with a brief, informal, and non-dramatic piece of stage-setting. The narrator relates how Washington crossed the Delaware; and someone quotes Washington, Tom Paine, and a plain soldier writing from camp. Or the narrator tells how on two successive days Burke spoke in London and Patrick Henry in Richmond on the issues of the Revolution; and someone reads their words. Or the significance of the first transcontinental is briefly explained, and Thomas Hart Benton's great plea for it ("There is the East—there is the road to India") is read. This is a book for the high-school student rather than the mature reader. It does not always escape banality. But by and large it shows how history can be offered on the radio with skill, accuracy, and simple fitness.

White Wisteria

By Anne Young

PALE curves remote as sculpture
Gracing a ruined wall,
Descend the windless air
In showers marmoreal.

A classic spring is here:
Serene, light-laden,
Lift high your votive garlands,
White youth, white maiden!

Nothing to Lose

SEND ME AN ANGEL. By Alice Nisbet. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1946. 128 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

ALICE NISBET speaks with a very quiet voice in this very brief novel about a black Delilah, desperately weary and lonely after a lively, lusty youth. But she speaks with a clarity about life and her Delilah which frees her book from that dramatic segregation of the Negro upon which the romanticists of the Left and the Right seem always equally insistent.

Miss Nisbet's Delilah is an American Negress in the American South. There is no doubt about that. Indeed, few writers have drawn so veracious and unsentimentalized a picture of a Negro in so brief a space as Miss Nisbet has done here. The world around Delilah on Mr. Ed's place is described with honesty of fact and spirit. Her Negro neighbors, friends, and enemies with their faults and virtues, are credible inhabitants of the rural South. The evidences of Jim Crow bands on their hopes and lives are very humanly clear. But the significant thing about Miss Nisbet's book is that she is not merely concerned with her Delilah as a Negress but as a woman also. And her story of the desperate loneliness of an aging woman with her man and child lost is not a novel about Negroes but about life. It is a truer book about Negroes for that fact.

It could be a very drab little story of a useless woman, pouting and grumbling, stealing and at last murdering, in protest againt the doings of God and the white folks, her old lover and her neighbors. It is a sometimes depressing story of a woman beyond lovers, unequal any longer even to debauch, robbed by her still lively ex-husband and then by death of the gentle half-wit child she adores. It all ends in very brief space when Delilah, with a murder charge before her, slips into the flood.

From such material Miss Nisbet has made a warm, true picture of a human life. It is more than that, I think, though Miss Nisbet provides no space for preaching in her brevity. Certainly Delilah was, as she summed it up herself, "a nigger woman." She has every qualification for insignificance. But Miss Nisbet has not carelessly chosen as heroine one of the weakest among us. In terms of Delilah's life she has made a moving story of the aging and the loneliness in the universal fate of man.

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Celebration of Man and God

THE FLOWERING OF THE ROD. By H. D. New York: Oxford University Press. 1946. 50 *pp.* $2.

THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF DYLAN THOMAS. By Dylan Thomas. New York: New Directions. 1946. 184 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

AT THE outset I must plead that it is not my personal inadequacy alone which is to blame for the unsatisfactory discussion which follows: the exigencies of space forbid the copious quotation necessary to illustrate the points that I wish to make, and I must speak arbitrarily, as it were in a kind of shorthand. This is the more the pity because at least Dylan Thomas's book deserves—demands!—the most fully documented treatment; and even the pleasant vices of "The Flowering of the Rod" merit more than the (apparently) casual dismissal that is all that I can afford to express here.

Both of these books are mystical, and both, in so far as their mysticism is expressed in esoteric or purely private symbols, are difficult. The theme of both is regeneration: rebirth, for Thomas, in the *mors secunda* of self-knowledge, "my genesis in sweat of death"; for H. D., less ascertainably because more sentimentally configured, a kind of resurrection from the death of bombed London, the type of our stricken world. The theme is noble and, *per se*, anything but novel; the validating novelty is obtained in the one instance, and missed in the other, by the counters which the poets employ.

The trouble with H. D.'s is that they are pretty, expected, and shopworn. "The Flowering of the Rod" is the third volume of a trilogy dealing with the recent war in terms of the birth-death-birth of Jesus. I have not read the first volume. Writing elsewhere of the second, "Tribute to the Angels," I confessed my disappointment at finding it so largely compact of brought-down-to-date Pre-Raphaelism: angels and archangels, lutes and cytharists, musks, embroideries, mystical etymologies, and the like. There is little in this third volume to alter my earlier judgment. The opening sections, to be sure, are cleaner; there are traces of H. D.'s old incisive, "Greek" style; but by the middle of the twelfth poem, when the business about Mary of Magdala and Kaspar and the alabaster jar begins, the reader is off on an uneasy Dolben-cum-Morris jaunt that starts vaguely from somewhere Biblical and ends, hardly more convincingly, in Bethlehem. I do not wish to be brutal; I should be a fool to pretend that H. D.'s intentions—her conceptions, even—are other than the highest; but it does seem clear to me that her whole method in these poems is false. For one thing, the diction is as pseudo-naive as the imagery is pseudo-medieval. The distichs are tranquil, the language simple; but too much of the tranquillity is achieved by means of a childlike and bootless repetition: "this Simon is not Simon Peter, of course, / this is not Simon Zelotes, the Canaanite // nor Simon of Cyrene / nor the later Simon, the sorcerer, // this Simon is Simon, the leper /"—by which time I am chiefly interested in celebrating the absence from the list of Simple S. & S. Legree. No, this is incantation, but of an irresponsible, even perverse, kind. It plays upon stock emotions, it is wide-eyed and sweet; once in a great while it strikes off an image or a phrase that sinks into the mind; but it is really reworked Dolben, Christmascardy; and one wonders regretfully what the result would have been if H. D.'s mysticism could have had the discipline of a Rendel Harris or a Kirsopp Lake.

To my mind, the incantations of Dylan Thomas are almost infinitely preferable although I follow him, when I follow him at all, many foggy miles behind. In a typically stimulating and informed introduction, Mr. John L. Sweeney does much to clarify the Thomas system. By insisting upon the importance of the poet's Welsh heritage and by recalling or suggesting sources of an ancestral nature—Donne, Vaughan, Herbert—he provides one with a useful key; and he provides fragments of anthropological and historical information which are at once helpful and discouraging. Discouraging, because such things as his explanation of "Christ's dazzling bed," while they illuminate whole passages, depend on so recondite a knowledge; but they are so enlightening, and the poetry discovered by them is so profoundly rewarding, that one can only be grateful for so sympathetic an exegete. Not that all of Thomas is dark: the second poem, for instance—"The force that through the green fuse drives the flower"—needs no guide but the reader's love to arrive at its beauty. But much is, and probably always must remain, dark. This poetry moves inward, Freudianly. The splendors and eloquences that the audience recognizes are as often as not of the nature of explosions, forcing the ear without persuading it. At times what seemed enigmatic turns out to depend upon a trick of rhetoric not far removed from cheapness: thus in "From Love's First Fever" the couplet

> Shone in my ears the light of sound,
> Called in my eyes the sound of light

is only a clever Swinburne-ish playing with chiasmus and sense-transference: a child couldn't do it, but more credit to the child! And even that extraordinary dialogue, "If my head hurt a hair's foot"—a masterwork of ambiguities—can change with one's mood, as I know from experience, from moving poem to dirty game. But when all the reservations have been noted, all the exceptions made, the book remains a passionate and absorbing fact. Its sweat and violence are miles removed from the alabastrine graces of H. D.'s myth; but for this reader, at any rate, it achieves what the other only decoratively suggests: the celebration of man, which is also the celebration of God.

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MINOR GRIPES

THERE are readers who are mildly or exceedingly exasperated to find a novel synopsized in ample detail on the jacket. The publisher's rejoinder to this emotional crisis is that the synopsis is put on the jacket not for the benefit (or for the annoyance) of the reader, but for the edification and convenience of the bookseller, who is frequently asked by a client what a book is all about and has to have an answer—some more informative answer, that is, than "I haven't the slightest idea—I haven't read it." What havoc this custom of digesting plots may eventually wreak on the bookseller's own mentality jolts the imagination. He must continually run the danger of getting two or more jacket summaries mixed up in his head—the Salisbury-Plain-on-a-bicycle sort of thing—and be in perpetual peril of seeming to go about in an ambulatory nightmare.

Of course, the customer is not forbidden, either by law or by convention, from exhibiting some self-restraint in the matter, and from refraining to read any of the synopsis beyond the sentence or two (one ought to be enough) which is required to tell him whether the story is laid in ante-bellum Virginia or post-Tudor England. But these jacket exegeses exercise an inescapable fascination. Once attracted to them, the reader can no more resist going on to the end than a tight-rope walker can call the whole thing off halfway.

It is not, perhaps, too much to hope that the publisher might be willing to curb his zeal for telling all. It should be possible to give the bookseller a satisfactory and sufficient hint of the contents of a novel without giving away the whole show. As the thing is done now, it is almost possible

for a "reader" to keep abreast of current letters without opening a book.

Another source of annoyance to many readers is the continuing unwillingness of many American publishers to Americanize the spelling of English texts issued on this side. If the English want to spell analyze analyse and harbor harbour, that is their business. Dr. John Ogilvie's "Imperial Dictionary of the English Language," published in 1883, declared: "*Analyse* and its derivatives are sometimes incorrectly written with *z* instead of *s*," which somehow recalls the traditional London *Times* heading: "Heavy Fog, Continent Isolated." (Is there any foundation for that story, by the way?) And while *The Times*, very properly, objects to being called *The London Times*, instead of *The Times* (London), it has itself to bow to American custom, however far off the beam that custom may be, in listing its New York office in the telephone directory, where it appears as "London Times The."

English publishers themselves are stoutly nationalistic when they issue an American book—no analyze, no harbor, for them. And quite right. Why do not American publishers adopt a parallel policy? Moreover, American publishers are consistently inconsistent in their present practice (if practice be not too strong a word—it may be mere carelessness or callousness.) The *-ise* and *-our* words are permitted to stand, but never *kerb* or *tyre*. The resulting dialect is a sort of Amer-english that nobody ever wrote or ever will. The matter is not trivial to the extent that any intrusive factor, however insignificant it may be in itself, tends to break down the illusion which the author, if he knows his trade, has succeeded in creating.

Publishers and authors alike could well conduct a little more extensive research in the matter of title duplications. These duplications are invariably inadvertent—the result of a simple failure to check with a comprehensive library card-index to determine if the title has ever been used before. The duplication certainly frightens off at least a few potential buyers who assume, quite reasonably, that they have already read the book.

Wouldn't it be pleasant if concerns such as these were the most serious things we had to worry about?

J.T.W.

Of Body and of Time

By Louise Townsend Nicholl

HOW exquisitely sweet is silent time,
The deep and quiet rapture of existence,
Of life so quiet that the ear can hear it.
This is the secret nourishment of being,
The Holy Water lavish for the spirit,
That life is time's mysterious other name,
Their fluctuations and their stuff the same—
The sense of body and of time agreeing.

Time is forever and the blood is now
But blood, time's ardent understudy,
In heart and wrist,
At corners of the brow,
Is time incarnate and incarnadine.
Time is in me, is mine
While I exist
In this precision instrument, the body,
Whose pulse is modulated to attend
Even the movement of the day, and lock
Exactly with the miracle of how
Its measured sands diminish and amass.

Suspend
A coin in a tumbler by a thread
And from the rhythmic throbbing in the thumb
The circle and the hand become a clock,
The metal disc a pendulum
Increasing in its power
Until, a heartbeat audible on glass,
It strikes the hour.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The Original Sin"

SIR: I have read the essay "The Original Sin," by A. N. Williams, in *SRL* January 18. Being one of those who, by his definition, has transgressed, I should like to plead my cause and that of others in radio broadcasting.

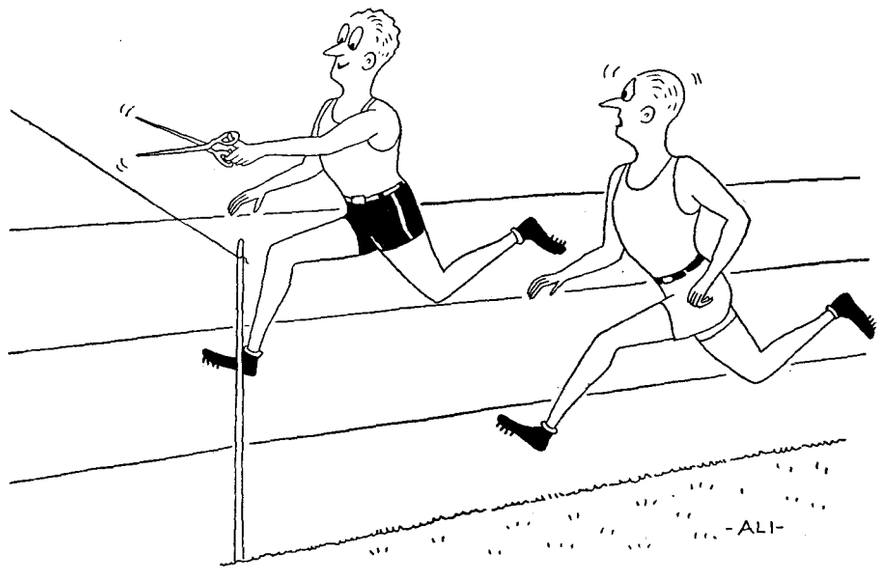
The article has undertaken to prove, by a system of literary open-field running, that the broadcasting art in the United States is under the control of a few prosperous advertisers. In generating arguments establishing this thesis, Williams has strongly implied that advertisers consciously seek to destroy whatever of *public interest* might be offered American listeners. This is specious and unworthy reasoning. It implies dishonor on the part of American manufacturers and, in effect, finds them guilty of some kind of oppressive collusion designed to undermine the public weal. I find it difficult to conjure visions of Procter & Gamble executives, as an example, surveying the mass impact of radio and concluding: "This is it, boys. We will take over the medium of radio and destroy public interest. There will be a by-product value to us as well. We'll sell some soap."

I view with wonder Mr. Williams's conclusion that "it [radio] is operated in the specific interest of a handful of patent medicine makers, soap chemists, and tobacco curers." Certainly, upon reflection, you must recognize this as a frivolous assertion.

There are well over a thousand broadcasting stations in the United States (and another couple of thousand on the way). They present programs supported by the advertising of literally tens of thousands of local and regional and national advertisers, as diversified in interests and philosophies as any selected group of Americans might be. The fiction, most notably circulated by Commissioner Clifford J. Durr, of the FCC, that radio is "controlled" or, for that matter, even principally supported by a "handful of advertisers" hasn't even the cohesion of ectoplasm. This "handful of advertisers" usually refers to about 15 or 20 large manufacturers—and in sum they represent something less than 20% of radio's annual gross income. Indeed, the network programs of *all* the advertisers on *all* of our national networks account for less than 25 per cent of the income of America's radio stations.

No less curious is Mr. Williams's statement that "radio is not, today, any of the things it was born to be." But, by my definition (and the millions of listeners view it as an acceptable one) radio was born to be a medium of mass communication: it was born to perform in the interest of the greatest number. That the least among us should measure its worth entirely by its shortcomings, lends little support to our democratic principles of majority rule.

I challenge the flat pronouncement that "radio is not operated in the public interest." Ample evidence to the contrary can be found in radio's truly astounding contribution to the war effort in mobilizing manpower



and material, in selling bonds, in its unceasing and unstinted service to every facet of America's war effort. And the American people agree — a whacking 67 per cent of them think that radio did the best job of any of the media of mass communication in serving the public during the war. Like evidence is to be found on every hand in radio's daily participation in a thousand philanthropic causes—the Red Cross, the Community Chest, Infantile Paralysis campaigns and the countless civic efforts to which it freely donates its time on community levels.

In the many recitals of radio evils which I have heard and read during the past year, principally contributed by marginal critics by the self-styled intellectual echelon, I have found studious resistance to the self-evident logic that the broadcaster must have listeners in order to make money. This is no chicken and egg allegory. We know which comes first. To obtain audience, he must program his station in a manner which attracts the attention and the affection of listeners: and he must be a man of sufficient good taste that he does not repel the public by tactics which operate against that public's interest. Does it seem demonstrable to you that a broadcaster would risk a career and important capital on a venture in which he was determined to destroy his entity by bad manners and poor judgment?

As to the popular observation in certain quarters that the airwaves belong to the people, I must ask this: to whom do they belong in Russia?—in England? Perhaps by this time Mr. Williams has seen the dispatch from London (*New York Times*, January 24) reciting the complaint of England's minority party that the British Broadcasting Corporation (a state-operated system) was showing preference to the left-wing speakers. It would appear, if the charges are substantiated, that in many parts of the world, the airwaves do, indeed belong to the people—the people who are in power.

For my part, I would rather entrust the stewardship of these airwaves to the thousand radio stations and the 60,000 people who are employed by them in America's free radio system. They, and only they, are responsive to the will of a hundred million listeners who vote for or against their programs every day and to whom they (the broadcasters) and, yea, even their advertisers, must look each quarter hour of every day for listening and for support.

I believe that Mr. Williams's listening habits, in the forum of the people, could be improved. I'm afraid he listens with too great concentration to the opinions of a respectable but narrow-visioned few who condemn radio as offensive to their own personal interests, conveniences, and necessities, and be damned to the public. It is high time he tune in the people whose current affection for radio is so great that they voluntarily spend more time listening to it than in any other occupation except working and sleeping.

A. D. WILLARD, JR.
Executive Vice President
National Association of Broadcasters
Washington, D. C.

"An Open-Eyed Conspiracy"

SIR: I respectfully request the courtesy of your correspondence column to ask for information concerning the present whereabouts of the manuscript of William Dean Howells's novel "An Open-Eyed Conspiracy." The present trail ends with its sale by the Carnegie Bookshop to a now unknown private collector in 1937 or 1938.

JOHN K. REEVES.
121 Lake Ave.,
Saratoga Springs, N. Y.

Or Is It?

SIR: But what a lovely thrill *this* is:
To have a critic call *Miss, Missis!*

EMOLYN G. COHN.
Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y.

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Seeing Things

THOSE SHORT HAPPY YEARS

ALTHOUGH the stage show was on when we arrived to see "The Yearling,"* it was the interior of Radio City's Music Hall which first caught his attention. To him at six, as to others much older, this was a show in itself. He looked with fascination at those acres of blurred figures sitting in the semi-darkness. He watched, enraptured, the magical lights as for the moment they were twinkling frostily in the great concentric arches of the ceiling.

"Know what it looks like?" he said at length. Neither to me nor to his startled neighbors. Just out loud, musingly to himself. "To me it looks like a great big igloo."

A thunderclap of applause, plus a sudden flood of light on the stage, caused him at last to look that way. The Corps de Ballet was in full and unanimous action. Its members were doing wholesale all those things which ballerinas will do retail. The mass fluttering of their hands and arms entranced him.

"Know what?" he exclaimed, bursting with admiration. "To me it looks like worms. Or elephants waving their noses."

He enjoyed the trained dogs, as children are apt to enjoy proofs of discipline in others. He was interested, too, in a Venetian number which included a gondola that he insisted (in spite of my mounting objections) was the kind of boat Eskimos use. Even so, I found myself more than ordinarily impatient during the stage show.

I wanted "The Yearling" to begin. It was the real reason for our Saturday afternoon expedition. His older brother having seen it with someone else, I was all the more anxious to see it with him. For, if ever there was a father-son movie, at least in its theme, "The Yearling" is that film.

There are many, many experiences which a father and son owe it to one another to share in common. I mean in the sense of initiatory adventures; of happenings which, since they are "firsts" for the son, are almost "firsts" for the father. Between the two of them the fairest of interchanges exists. The one trades his amazed discovery of life for the other's delighted rediscovery of his own youth. Hence both serve as guides, though in this special partnership the real gainer is usually the father. If he stands in the son's debt, it is because he has the more attentive ears and eyes. What he hears and sees at such moments, he sees and hears doubly—for himself and for his son, with the present and the past strangely fused, and aware also of the whisperings of the future.

Certainly I neither did nor could expect a child of six to understand what, from a grown-up's point of view, is most dissolving in "The Yearling," and that is youth itself. To him it was the story, uncomfortable but exciting, of how a boy had at last to kill the fawn that had been his pet and friend when, as a yearling, this same fawn had become a menace to the slim crops on a Florida farm.

He liked the fawn immensely. He found him both "cute" and "neat." He liked Flag as a name for him, too. He was sorry that New York is, except for its zoos, a fawnless place because, he confessed, he wanted a fawn like Jody's.

To my surprise, however, he accepted Flag's fate without violent protest or any tears. He was as eager to understand the cruel logic demanding Flag's death as I was to soften its sadness by explaining it. "He grew up bad" was the way he consoled himself, though the desperate tone in which he added "didn't he?" indicated he was far from happy.

"In 'The Yearling' the male understanding between Pa Baxter and Jody is subtly and skilfully established without mawkishness."

The slowly mounting tension of the film was not without its effects upon him. When the dogs were fighting a losing battle with old Slewfoot, the fierce black bear; when the Forrester men were brawling; when the crippled boy who was Jody's friend died; and when the dread decision to do away with Flag had been made, he buried his head in the back of his chair. Twice, as the tension became too great, long and embarrassing treks had to be made in the search of comfort.

"They had to kill him, I suppose, didn't they?" was his comment at the end, on the way down the long stairs for another visit to that much-visited room. "But it was a sad, good story, wasn't it?"

It was, and is, because "The Yearling" has a quality most films cannot claim. It is something born of the open air; of fields and rivers and forests; of the primal issues of life and survival as they are there encountered; of the poverty of humble, hard-driven people; and of man's courage and patience in his endless struggle with nature. The film's technicolor may detract from its reality by proving at times a gaudy substitute for the genuine color of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's prose. The story, as screened, may also fail emotionally to do that full, drenching damage which one would have expected, and to which, as a push-over at such orgies, I at least had looked forward. And Jane Wyman's characterization of the tight-lipped and drained Ma Baxter may seem closer to Hollywood's prettiness than the ravages of the soil.

YET, underneath all of the picture's glossiness and its occasional *National Geographic* touches, this outdoor —this simple, this fundamental—quality does come through. What is more, in Paul Osborn's sensitive scenario, and Clarence Brown's reticent direction, and, above all, in Gregory Peck's and young Claude Jarman's admirable playing of the father and son, it comes through with dignity. Somehow the film manages to be commendably unsentimental in its approach to what could easily have sunk into a quagmire of sentimentality.

Only the camera could bring nature herself indoors as "The Yearling" does. Or should I say, take us out-of-doors without our stirring? Only the camera could ask a real black bear to shuffle before an audience as a palpable villain. Or turn a fawn into a character and invite us to watch him as, before our eyes, he actually grows from babyhood into a yearling within two short hours.

On the screen, as in Mrs. Rawlings's novel, the fawn is, of course, more

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* *THE YEARLING, a Technicolor film, based on Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's novel. Screen play by Paul Osborn. Directed by Clarence Brown. Produced by Sidney Franklin. A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture. With Gregory Peck, Jane Wyman, Claude Jarman, Jr., Margaret Wycherly, Henry Travers, etc. At the Radio City Music Hall.*

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than a luckless animal who must die. He is the symbol of youth itself. What happens to him at the point of a gun is what happens to Jody under the threat of time. The fawn is as free to roam and jump and run as is the lonely boy to whom he is the closest of friends. If Flag is condemned, so is Jody's youth. Both of them end up as yearlings. The fawn may lose his life, but no less surely Jody must abandon the carefree delights of childhood.

It was the awareness of sentenced youth which in "The Yearling" moved me even more than Flag's death, anguishing as it is and much as I dreaded it for its own sake. It was this awareness, plus the deeply tender, though mute, relationship between Pa Baxter and his son Jody.

Not unnaturally, neither of these aspects of the film seemed to mean anything to my six-year-old companion. Youth for him is a state of being which he cannot imagine as ever ending. He may see around him the other world of grown-ups. Still he lives rapturously in that world of his own which his years deserve. I suspect his conviction is that the grown-up's is a universe composed of baffling but amiable helots who exist only as guardians of his own.

His fancy may cause him to elect fitfully such future professions as fireman, policeman, or cowboy. But, though he anticipates handling the engines, nightsticks, ponies, or guns which are the rewards of such choices, he does not—cannot—picture himself as an adult in these costumes. He sees them as cut down to his size and worn only for fun. In other words, for birthday party or play purposes.

Pain (that is, real interior pain, and not a scratched knee); death; breadwinning; responsibility; the erosions of adult life and adult hopes; the enslaving processes of routine drudgery; the bruises, inevitable and ugly, which lie ahead; the wounds from which there is no protection except Time which will bring them—of these he fortunately has no foresight. He is one of the present's blissful young. Several enchanted birthdays still divide him from the time when he will himself be a yearling. Hence he cannot know, any more than any young son can, what strange tuggings at the heart he causes as the days go by and, little by little, in this way and in that, he races forward to hurry the season of his growing up.

He does not know, nor do I want him to know as yet, what Pa Baxter is talking about (except that he seemed "sad") when, at "The Yearling's" end, Pa turns to the Jody who has had manhood thrust cruelly upon him to say: "I've wanted life to be easy for

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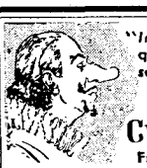
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you. Easier'n 'twas for me. A man's heart aches, seein' his young uns face the world. Knowin' they got to git their guts tore out, the way his was tore. I wanted to spare you, long as I could. I wanted you to frolic with your yearlin'. I knowed the lonesomeness he eased for you. But ever' man's lonesome."

Every father has felt and phrased this (at least to himself) in his own way. Every father has looked at his young, glorying in their youth and sighing for it, too. He has sighed for it because no season is at once so radiant and so short. If the young do not suspect this, their parents realize it. Day by day they see their children's childish days slip through their fingers. Doubtless, none of them would, even if they could, halt time. Certainly they should not endeavor to do so. Still those cuddly, dependent days of faith and discovery slip by as swiftly as if they were minutes.

The period is brief when, to his son, a father walks the earth as a sage, a Chief Justice, a guide to undreamed-of vistas, a center of trust, and a friend whose word is not questioned, even if his authority is. Yet, brief as that period is, it is glorious. And all the more touching because of the confidence that goes with it. Soon, of course, this confidence will be transferred, and the center of authority move on—to the boy on the next block, the teacher in school, the counselor at camp, and an ever-growing line of legitimate successors. There is no stopping its removal. There is only the fervent trust that the companionship will remain.

In "The Yearling" the male understanding between Pa Baxter and Jody is subtly and skilfully established without mawkishness. So is that transference of hope from the old to the young which is part of all parenthood, and which marks the renewal of life rather than its ebbing. So, too, is the sense of replacement; of the boy-turned-man taking over the father's tasks.

"Sad, wasn't it?" said my companion two or three times on the way home. He was thinking of the stricken deer.

"Yes," I agreed. "It is sad." But I was thinking of Jody, that other yearling, and of the young boy beside me. And of the abundant, if fugitive, pleasures of our friendship.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

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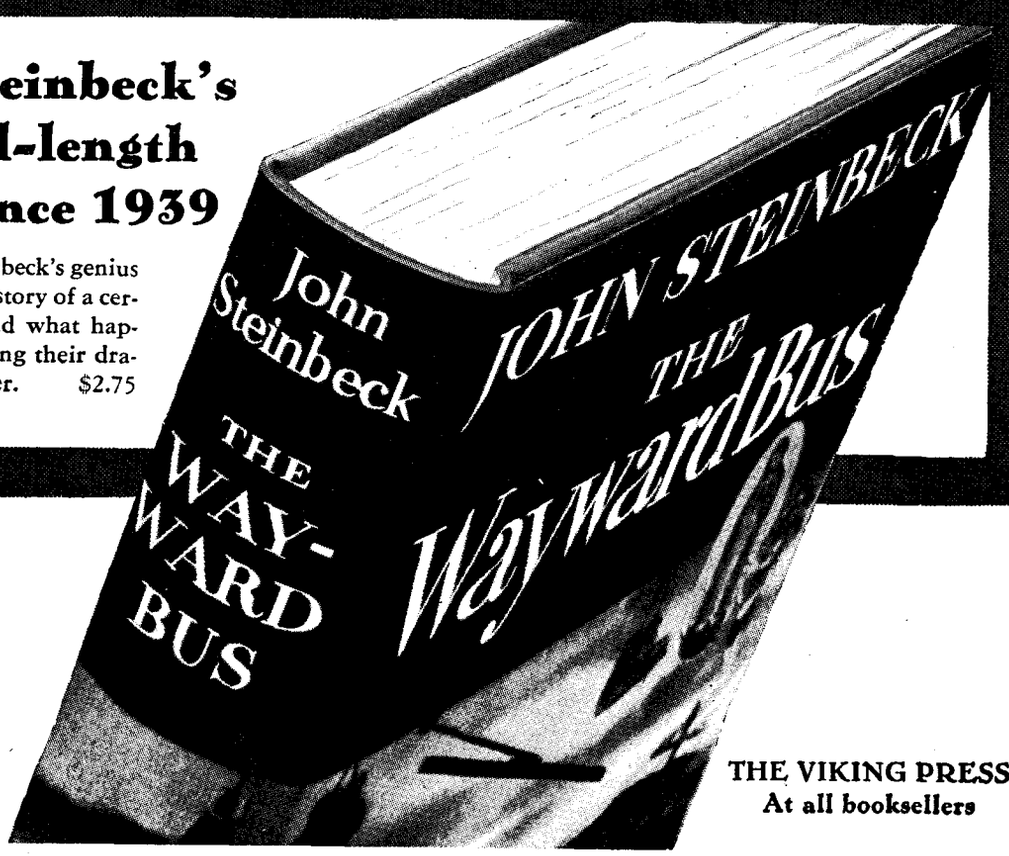

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Hollow Men with Wilde Wit

GAME FOR ONE PLAYER. By Vera Birch. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 248 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

MRS. BIRCH has written a devilishly clever novel about a clever and devilish young man. Its hard, icy surface glitters with particles of brittle wit that almost completely conceal any warmth underneath. Yet warmth of a sort there is, the warmth that derives from a fine sense of satire, a competent style, and an ability to create, however indirectly, time, place, and people.

The period is that from about 1936 to the present and the place is England, an England in which great family estates are slowly disintegrating and in which the old aristocracy preserves a sense of responsibility with "nothing left to be responsible for." Mrs. Birch, daughter of a viscount and wife of a Cambridge don, sometime play-reader, traveler, painter, and war-worker, has put her wide-ranging background and experience to good use. The story moves from London to various country houses and back again, from a literary agent's offices to a Mediterranean villa, from a theatre in the suburbs to a building where secret investigations for the government are in progress.

The hero of the tale, if he can be so called, is Gervaise, Lord Blaid, a recent Cambridge graduate who feels that he has betrayed his ancestral home by his inability to make enough money to support it. Traditionally he ought to marry an heiress, but the girls he likes are not rich and those to whom he is particularly attracted have other drawbacks as well. He drifts into play-reading for a literary agent, thus feathering some of Mrs. Birch's best satirical darts, but essentially he is a spineless hero, successively dominated by his nanny, his mother, and Ian Rutherford.

Ian Rutherford, co-hero or villain of the piece as one chooses, is the man who plays the game for one player, moving his friends into and out of each other's lives at will. He is a vague, engaging, irresponsible fellow who seldom keeps his word, is adored by everyone, walks out on them when he likes, and flippantly wrecks the happiness of those he ensnares. His transparent insincerity sometimes infuriates his captives, but he can always win them back again by the charm of his insouciant gaiety and by the potential poison of his imaginative fabrications. When asked what he does with himself, he answers, "I grind the faces of the poor. Very hard work," and when pressed further as to how he spends his time, he replies, "I waste it." Even after he has fought three years and been a prisoner of war in Germany, he remains his old self saying, "We mustn't laugh any more . . . it's bad form. I shall have to get some fearfully serious work to do to keep my spirits low."

Like Ian, most of the young sophisticates in the book avoid sentiment as if it would burn. They will do anything to raise a smile and they regularly entertain each other by impaling the reputations of their dearest friends on epigrams. Dulness constitutes the supreme crime; the weapon with which they slay and which in turn slays them is ridicule. And yet when they are wounded, they bleed like the rest of us, though perhaps a shade more blithely.

With its crackling brightness this tale will amuse all but the stodgier members of the audience. They will object with reason that Gervaise is not as sharply defined as Ian and that toward the end of the book the author fumbles slightly in knotting the threads of her plot. They will also suggest, fairly enough, that at a time when most of the world including England worried seriously about the future, the hollow men of this story worried only about *bons mots.* The few "good" people in the novel are satirized as enjoying "a suet-pudding outlook" and belonging to a world "where it is even unmoral to have lunch with someone else's wife." The author is usually on the side of the devils who, as one of them observes, are "useless, decorative, over-civilized people. And idle, beautifully idle." She makes them most diverting, however, and it must be confessed that her dull, heavy angels are no less so.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Lowell: "The Vision of Sir Launfal." 2. Young: "Night Thoughts." 3. Whitman: "O Captain! My Captain!" 4. Longfellow: "Evangeline." 5. Arnold: "The Forsaken Merman." 6. Moore: "Those Evening Bells." 7. Byron: "Don Juan." 8. Harte: "The Mission Bells of Monterey." 9. Coleridge: "The Ancient Mariner." 10. Housman: "Bredon Hill." 11. Tennyson: "Crossing the Bar." 12. Hood: "Faithless Sally Brown." 13. Father Prout: "The Bells of Shandon." 14. Dickens: "The Old Curiosity Shop." 15. Kipling: "Mandalay." 16. Poe: "The Bells." 17. Keats: "Ode to a Nightingale." 18. Shakespeare: "Hamlet." 19. Gilbert: "Pinafore." 20. Thackeray: "The End of the Play."

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Morality Play

THE PLATTER. By A. M. De Jong. New York: Querido, Inc. 1946. 160 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR C. FIELDS

PERHAPS one of the most noticeable reactions to the shower of brutally realistic war books that has deluged American fiction in the past two years, has been the appearance of the fairy tale, written primarily for adults, an allegory with a moral seemingly less obvious under a coating of sweet innocence, but just as emphatic as an Aesop fable. Such books as "The White Deer" and "Animal Farm" have developed this form of charming editorial comment to a perfection that may some day rival the great Jonathan Swift.

"The Platter" would seem to belong to this group. Unlike Messrs. Thurber and Orwell, however, Mr. De Jong wrote his tale back in the peaceful days of 1933 when Holland, which forms the setting for the story, was still famous for its tulip beds instead of for the military importance of inundated dikes. But also, unlike these modern, grownup fairy tales, aside from providing a rich picture of the local color of Holland's southern provinces, "The Platter" is in reality more of a morality play—serving mainly to drive home a point, not of the failure of communism or of politics, but of simple human values.

One bright, sunny day, while wandering through the farm lands of the Brabant province of southern Netherlands, a peddler (nicknamed Klomp because of his club foot) happened upon a strange piece of china—a platter with a small coat-of-arms and possessed with a "light, purplish-golden glow . . . called golden earth." The sale and resale of this apparently worthless object serves as material for the entire plot, a plot which, needless to say, is slight and unpretentious. But it is through the medium of this tale that the author points out the evil of avarice.

But to judge further than the obvious moral is, unfortunately, impossible, since whatever merit may lie in the original Dutch text of "The Platter" is completely lost in the poor translation. For Alfred van Ameyden van Duym has let the spirit of the tale slip completely past him; and, in turn, has transcribed it in vile, earthy language that is as out of place as would be Studs Lonigan's vulgarisms in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." In addition, there is a noted discrepancy between the smoothness of the translation of the earlier and later pages of the book.

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An Extraordinarily Unlucky Family

FORTUNE MY FOE. By Audrey Lindop. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 311 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by CONSTANCE CURTIS

I DID not like "Fortune My Foe" from its very beginning. An opening sentence which introduced the main character, calmly deciding the proper time of day in which to kill herself, impressed me as being labored melodrama. This melodrama increased and my interest tended to decrease in about equal and opposite proportion as the story progressed, or, I might say, lengthened.

The novel concerns itself in the main with Clare Vetch, who at forty-five has arrived at complete, suicidal boredom because she is unable to decide whether she has been marked by fate for unhappiness or is miserable because of the things which she has, and has not, done with her life.

By way of accounting for this twentieth-century Clare, we are carried back to 1829 where we make the acquaintance of her great-grandmother, Clare Julliet Vetch, and the morose and obsessed man who was Hamilton Durrey, Clare Julliet's lover.

Across the generations the warring strains of Durreys and Vetches meet and mingle, with results that flower darkly in murder, blackmail, adultery, and what, for an uncomfortable moment, appeared to be incest. I was willing to accept the things that happened to this unfortunate family, but I wanted to know more about why they had happened and of what went on inside the Durreys and Vetches to account for their unusual conduct. Had such explanations been given it might have been possible to liken "Fortune My Foe" distantly to the beginning of a "The Forsyte Saga," but as the history of these generations has been recorded it is merely a lean, year-by-year account of an extraordinarily unlucky family.

In like manner the novel lost an opportunity to show in the character of Clare Vetch the accumulated pressures of her environment, changed and made bearable through her strength. Since, however, there is so little analysis of Clare's ancestors it is too much to ask of the author to build on that flimsy foundation a clear and rounded picture of Clare herself.

"Fortune My Foe" was written, I assume, for purposes of entertainment and I should not judge it on the basis of its psychological material (the various "obsessions" of some of the characters amount almost to an obsession with the author) or its historical passages which seemed little more than a transparent device. Even the purpose of the book is lost in the conglomerate ideas thrown into the plot without a feeling for form or unity. One hopes that in her future work Miss Lindop will be able to develop the slender gifts that are now already hers and to eliminate the superficialities which have marred her first published work.

"The various 'obsessions' of some of the characters amount almost to an obsession" with Audrey Lindop.

The jacket informs me that Miss Lindop was both a radio and screen writer. It seems to me that she has both the virtue and vice of this medium, facility without depth.

FRASER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT: No. 192

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 192 will be found in the next issue.

OS EKG VQDS K PHPD EOH

FOHINOF FOS GIW OKT

AQGSW FH OSKA OQX PAHE.

—NSHANS SVQHF.—KTKX

MSTS.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 191

Habit with him was all the test of truth,
"It must be right: I've done it from my youth."
—"The Vicar."
GEORGE CRABBE.

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(*Continued from page 8*)

tales, there are the large number of so-called more serious women writers of fiction. One first thinks of Ellen Glasgow, Willa Cather, and Edith Wharton. These three wrote of serious concerns with great skill. Ellen Glasgow was a student of the social order in the South, Willa Cather of the simple person and the land on which he lived; Edith Wharton, while dealing with the world of upper-class manners, was capable of profound psychological insights. But these are the women writers of the near past. As of now, we have a formidable group of them and their number is kept constantly up to strength. There are Pearl Buck, Katharine Anne Porter, Kay Boyle, Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, Ayn Rand, Dorothy Parker, Dawn Powell, Laura Hobson, Taylor Caldwell, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. This is a formidable list, thrown together helter-skelter as they have come to mind, not sorted as to relatedness in manner or matter. What are they concerned with? Are they similar to the men who are writing at this same time?

They seem, at easy first glance, to fall into several groups. First, those who write a story usually dealing with a theme similar to the ones of the fairy-tale tellers—love and the relations of men and women. Then we have those who, while dealing essentially with the same underlying idea, are manneristic and precious: Eudora Welty with her misty, nebulous evocations of a past which is seen through rosy lenses; Carson McCullers and her preoccupation with the bizarre and divergent in the relations between people. In this field, but with a difference, is Katharine Anne Porter, whose sensitive lancet dissects the most delicate aspects of such relationships with a passionate intensity.

So far, it appears that in their imaginative work women writers concern themselves largely with the ties and tensions between individuals. There is another phase of this same concern which has a large representation among contemporary women. We may, I think, safely call this the gossip school of writing. Exemplified by the work of such women as Vicki Baum, Ursula Parrott, Mary McCarthy, Dawn Powell, and others, it is only a written record of back door tattle and appears to concern itself with the experience of its authors or extensions of those experiences. Largely, it exhibits an intense hostility to men who are viewed as marauders of a particularly odious sort.

Along with these we have some of the self-exposing variety. These are not represented as memoirs or confessions but are put out as the lively stories of peculiarly valuable lives. Here we are likely to get the musings of women of note on the exquisite accidents which have propelled them to their glamorous lives.

One can think of more groups as well as of some who do not easily fit into any classification. Gertrude Stein defies attempts at pigeon-holing, of course. She intended to. Dorothy Parker has something of a corner on unrelieved hostility toward both sexes. Ayn Rand shows a rare preoccupation with a philosophical problem; Lillian Smith an equally rare concern with a social disaster.

LEAVING aside those who are *sui generis* (and they are by no means frequent) certain things are quickly obvious. Prominently, we can see that women's area in writing, self-chosen of course, is very nearly exclusively fiction. They appear to care little for subjects of social, political, economic, or historical nature. Biography they usually prefer to present in fictionized form. It is striking that women are concerned so nearly exclusively in their writing with the individualized man-woman relationship. Love in all sorts of dress is constantly recurrent. If not, there they are preoccupied with interpersonal relationships in some other sphere. This runs the range from day-dream to gossip flavored with either honey or aloes. It displays all sorts of manners and has every variety of style and approach.

They show very little concern with the problems of man to his environment, social or physical. There are no women writers of the Dos Passos,

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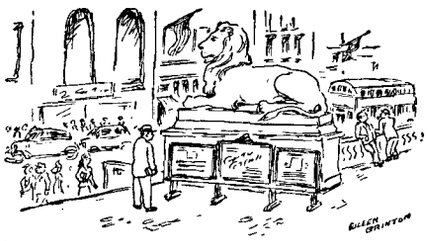

Hemingway, Steinbeck genre. Women seldom present the strong medicine. They do not choose to wrestle with the difficulties and tragedies man meets in the moral world. Rarely do they give us the grimly realistic.

This is based on the most rapid and inevitably faulty survey. Too much has had to be left to one side: women as reporters, women poets, and many others. Taking what we have it seems that had we made *a priori* assumptions about the whole question, we should have arrived at the very ideas we find on examination.

Women display their essential concern with inwardness, with the satisfactions and dreams of the individual. For them, life is intensely the personal encounter and largely, within that, a matter of the love relation. They are no more always good-tempered about it in writing than in life. They can be, and often are, gossips. They leave aside with barely a nod the broad abstractions, the great struggles of man's spirit with the material or moral world. They do not strive with logic. Theirs is the immediate, the sensed and intuitively known, the deeply-felt, the life of the heart. These things fit neatly into what is known and observed about the essentially feminine which remains much unchanged—the intimate, personal, immediate, and intuitive.

Marynia F. Farnham, co-author of the controversial "Woman: The Lost Sex," is a prominent New York psychiatrist.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
TERROR IN THE TOWN *Edward Ronns* (McKay: $2.)	Strangling of two Cape Cod spinsters and harpooning of third finally elucidated by newspaper editor and chance-taking young wife.	Injured family pride, hidden treasure, political chicanery, sadism—all commingled in pretty exciting hell-broth which is bit too thick.	Grade B
KILLER IN THE KITCHEN *Franklin James* (Lantern Press: $2.)	Mrs. Mickey Richards, in Chicago to see about her nearby roadhouse, finds cook decapitated and dirty work afoot. She acts.	Glamorous and uninhibited war widow battles choice crop of thugs, consorts with others, and finally hits bullet-riddled jackpot.	Tough quickie
THE TITLE IS MURDER *Hugh Laurence Nelson* (Rinehart: $2.)	Shipping - room knife ends life of San Francisco bookstore owner. Scissors cut off two sales people. Lieut. Johnson and assistants officiate.	Boiling with action, pungent people, lit'ry allusions; author (*fem.*?) capitally captures hectic (*colloq.*) bookstore atmosphere; writing breathless . . and fantastically punctuated.	Good gory fun!
PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A DEAD MAN *Francis Bonnamy* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.50)	Dubious suicide of libidinous Spanish artist in suburban Washington barn-studio starts Peter Shane of G-2 on dangerous and devious trail.	Shuddery atmosphere of opening chapters, clever discovery of stolen-masterpiece racket, and shrewd pictures of Capital women atone for aggravating ending.	Could be better
CHEER FOR THE DEAD *Eli Colter* (Mill: $2.50)	Disappointed Cal. millionaire dies from "unfortunate accident." Massive Pat Campbell has doubts. Two more exit before Campbell cracks case.	Motive aplenty—8,000,000 bucks and missing heir; determined and well-hidden killer; commendable detecting and sufficient suspense.	So-so.
THREE TO MAKE MURDER *Victor Patrick* (Mystery House: $2.)	Long Island shooting of malevolent millionaire covered up by daughter's sweetheart. Subsequent homicides open tough case for local and state cops.	Houseful of neurotics, dipsos, gangsters, and feverish femmes produces expected results. Melodramatic presentation submerges pair of pretty good sleuths.	Tawdry

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HEARING THINGS

CALIFORNIA, HERE I COME . . .

THE City of Los Angeles is building an opera house. This is indeed welcome news for the music-loving public, and bears out many other manifestations emanating from California of a lively awareness of the importance of music in our life. Remarkable progress has been made in all branches of music in the Golden State. Her colleges have developed, within the last few years, first-class music departments where a great deal of original work is done in music education, composition, and musicology. Several of our eminent composers are residing there and, together with a number of distinguished foreign-born colleagues, form a group which when coalesced will undoubtedly lead to a regional school of great distinction.

The musical scholars are busy bringing forth publications, some of which are hailed both here and abroad, the libraries are rapidly building up their collections and are making the West less dependent on the great Eastern collections. California, more precisely, San Francisco, has a music critic or two not afraid to go their own way instead of echoing the platitudes expected from their trade. And then there is a rich fare of music; first-class orchestras with first-class conductors—they have no platform Romeos or magicians of the baton—they are just excellent musicians who know the orchestra inside out, know what is in the scores without anyone's telling them, and know how to communicate the contents of these scores without hocus-pocus and theatricals. Why, one of these gentlemen is an American who not only makes his orchestra play like nobody's business, but makes the orchestra's business nobody's plaything: the orchestra is self-supporting, even though it insists on great variety in its programs, and plays a good many modern works. Recitals are numerous and are as varied as people can make them within our system of planned musical economy.

Californians are valiantly trying to break through the concert racket dominated by a few New York entrepreneurs, as the great success of the New York Friends of Music demonstrates is not impossible. To mention one interesting attempt, there is an organization in Los Angeles known as "Evenings on the Roof," now in its ninth year of existence, which gives chamber concerts at a price not far from admission fees of second-run movie theatres, with programs that reflect as much artistic integrity as they do intelligence, courage, and foresight. The performances, mainly by able local artists—a system which is the keystone of a true musical culture—have a faithful and growing public. And now this dynamic musical life is about to be enriched by a magnificent institution around which it can rally its forces.

Opera used to be the focal point of musical life for centuries and, as we have so often said, it is opera that has always played the role of mother earth to all music since the seventeenth century. It is a pleasure to speculate on how the energetic Californians might go about organizing their new permanent opera house. Surely they will not make the mistake of turning their theatre into a social club. We can imagine them appointing a staff of able and progressive managers, recruiting a company in which everyone will be required to command a repertory encompassing all types of opera, dispensing with the specialist who sings in one language only and only certain parts in certain operas. (There is more than one famous Wagnerian tenor who does not know the third act of "Die Walküre" because the tenor part ends in the second act with the death of the hero.) They will want to have singers who can sing in several languages, but who first of all will have an impeccable English enunciation.

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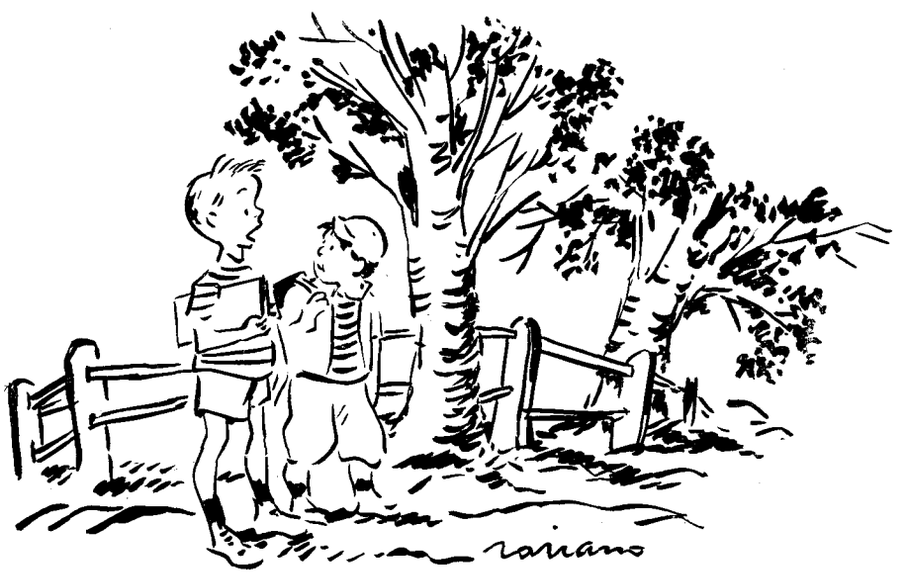
requirements of an opera singer, and they will demand the same of their conductors and stage directors. The latter will know that an operatic stage is not an *ersatz* playhouse where people, slowed down by music, deport themselves as embarrassed actors. The performances will be mostly in English. They will probably consult Professor Dent of Cambridge University and his fine and musicianly translations and make sure that other translations will be made by equally competent people. They realize, of course, that opera in translation is a compromise, and that there are operas —"Così fan Tutte," to mention one— that virtually defy any attempt at translation, but they also realize that opera is theatre and that it is of the first importance to understand what goes on, even at the risk of losing some of the fine points of music that are lost anyway. They will insist on a well balanced ensemble rather than on stars of unequal magnitude, will have a chorus composed of singers who are still eligible for life insurance, and an orchestra good enough to stand on its own legs if necessary. If they carry out such simple, obvious, and commonsense ideas, have a nicely balanced repertory, sung by fresh voices, well rehearsed, well staged, they will have done something for American musical culture that cannot be evaluated in any currency. And I am sure that a new, original, free, and progressive Los Angeles Opera House would give the signal for other cities to follow suit.

Well, what is actually about to happen? The new Los Angeles Opera House is intended to become the New York Metropolitan Opera House's "second" or "Western" home, whither it will repair after the strenuous few weeks' season in New York. And what seems almost incredible, this scheme was not thought up by the Met, but is reported to have originated in Los Angeles. There is no earthly reason why the Metropolitan Opera Company—already a monopoly in the East, and incidentally a near-monopoly in Chicago's and San Francisco's operatic setup—should actually prevent the development of local institutions. If the company has so much time to spare, then let them give a forty-week season in their home town, citizens of which cannot get tickets to the performances. Let Los Angeles music shift for itself; it is perfectly capable of doing so. We harbor no enmity toward the Met, and we recognize it to be a great institution, but we do believe that it is a left-over from the last century and wishes to perpetuate a managerial tradition that is an anachronism in a modern democratic republic. Let us hope that the large cities of this vast country which takes pride in their own museums, universities, and all sorts of other institutions, will realize that it is to their and the country's advantage to have their opera too. They would not want their local university or museum displaced by a branch office of some Eastern university or museum; there is no reason why they should go to great sacrifices for the benefit of a New York institution when they can have their very own. We hope that this controversy will be settled amicably when it is realized that this kind of empire building may be all right in industry but is definitely harmful for an orderly development of art. We feel sure that Californians will stand up and defend their musical climate.

PAUL HENRY LANG.



"What's the sense of growing up if we have to be adults?"

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HENRY ADAMS: MAN OF LETTERS

(*Continued from page 12*)

in spite of the fallacious cosmology upon which it is based. The criticism of Henry Adams is only beginning to reach that stage.

Only in the esthetic expression of his position did he reach any degree of finality. To him his major works, the "Chartres" and the "Education," formed a unified, albeit an imperfect, whole. The importance of their interrelationship is stressed by his repeating in his preface the key passage of the "Education" in which he explains their common purpose.

The two books in concept are one, a planned work of the imagination rather than an historical, autobiographical, or scientific record or argument; he would evaluate the timeless quality of experience rather than the circumstantial references. As art, these books should therefore be approached only as companion studies in unity and multiplicity. As contributions to the philosophy of history, they may be accepted or discredited at will without invalidating this approach. Man's inner need for discovering a system of unity in his experience and his constant difficulty in reconciling this need to the multiple influences of the world outside of himself is the most persistent theme of all literature. It is the problem of Oedipus, Hamlet, and Faust; of Tom Jones, Ahab, and Ma Joad. Emerson discussed it for his age; Henry Adams did the same for an age when the conflict was infinitely more acute and the solution less apparently obvious.

In exploring the nature of unity, Adams was led back to his study of medieval history, and he added to it a wide reading in chivalric poetry, works on medieval architecture, and the writings of Christian philosophers from Abelard to Thomas Aquinas. Again he was the inspired amateur rather than the documentary scholar or the conventional man of letters. He read books only when they "helped." Slowly he formed his pattern about the symbol to the Virgin—not Mary as person or as divinity, but the Lady of Chartres as creation of the medieval imagination. The selection of the century 1150-1250 was dictated by the facts because then the conception of the Virgin had become, for one moment in history, an effective symbol of man's eternal desire for inner and outer harmony, expressed both in art and philosophy. Just how this image evolved and what significance it might have not only for medieval but for universal man became one-half of his life's concern. The result has served as a study of the medieval mind; it is only now coming to be recognized for its insight into the universal mind.

The structure of the book is apparent only when this central purpose is kept in mind. Adams's facetious statement that it is merely a *tour de force* for the entertainment of his nieces and "nieces in wishes" is obvious screening of its profound value to him. His light, bantering tone persists throughout, without hampering the careful unfolding of his plan.

The book falls into three somewhat unequal parts: the preparation of the medieval mind for its gigantic effort of synthesis just before its collapse; its achievement of emotional unity in the first half of the thirteenth century as represented in the Cathedral of Chartres; and the translation of this process into the rational terms of medieval philosophy. For the first the Archangel Michael serves as personal focus, for the second the Virgin, for the third St. Thomas. Above them all the Virgin becomes the symbol of unity achieved. The transition from worship of a masculine to that of a feminine deity is hinted at in the "Roman de la Rose" and acknowledged in the religious chivalry of Thibault. Poetry, history, and architecture combine, with all their intricate details, in an esthetic synthesis which makes manifest the sovereignty of the Virgin. Abelard, Bernard de Clairveaux, St. Francis, and St. Thomas add each his philosophy to emphasize the result and to translate it back from emotion to scholastic logic, from the supreme feminine intuition to the masculine approximation of truth through reason. For once, man's inner need for harmony seemed, at least in the perspective of later centuries, to have been partially supplied.

THE truth which Adams here tacitly recognizes is that unity may be achieved through emotion even when denied by reason. His Virgin is completely irrational, her power nonetheless centripetal. "Mary fills her church without being disturbed by quarrels" because she "concentrated in herself the whole rebellion of man against fate. . . . She was above law; she took feminine pleasure in turning hell into an ornament; she delighted in trampling on every social distinction in this world and the next."

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Yet she answered the prayers of her suppliants because she judged by love alone. She could put in terms of positive symbolism what the hooded figure in Rock Creek could only permit by reflection. This is what Adams had learned from the American woman, but he had to trace it back to twelfth-century France to find it unembarrassed and whole. Intuition is above reason; love may triumph over logic; art can speak deeper truths than science.

With the same detachment Adams then turned immediately to the other half of his problem: the study of multiplicity. Here the age of obvious choice was the present, the person of obvious focus himself. Even at the risk of being accused of merely writing his autobiography, he undertook "The Education of Henry Adams, a Study in Twentieth-Century Multiplicity." The detachment of the third-personal pronoun is not an affectation; it is an integral part of his scheme. He might have written of someone else had he known any other experience as well as his own. As the forces which he wished to examine are universal, as well as peculiar to the age, he would do as well as another for their point of impact. For the impersonality of the Ego, he turns again to Oriental thought. In a biographical testament of friendship to George Cabot Lodge, published in 1911, he states that the poet seeks unity in "some one great tragic motive." From the analysis of his own experience, Adams might witness the action of this tragic movement in the modern world and in harmony with the new concept of Energy which science had supplied. This he attempts in the "Education."

This book also falls roughly into three parts: the inadequate and misleading preparation of a generation which reached maturity at the moment in history when the challenge of modern science became generally felt; the effort of one individual to adjust to this new and centrifugal world of multiplicity; and the translation of the result into a rational formula. The problem was more baffling because the perspective of time was lacking. On the other hand, the material was more familiar. Nor was a central symbol as easy to find. Frank Norris, at the same time on the same quest, adopted the railroad as symbol in "The Octopus." Adams, in the high excitement of discovery, chose the dynamo which he saw first at the Chicago Exposition in 1893. Here was the outward image of his second kind of force, almost specific enough to excite worship if worship were due.

It would be dangerous to press the symbolic parallelism of these two books too far, but the temptation to explore it is great. As the power of the Virgin is humanity on the level of divinity, so that of the dynamo is mechanism raised to the infinite. In the one case, the power operated on an impassive and non-human object, the Cathedral of Chartres, which in a sense becomes a subordinate or reflective symbol; in the other, the object of the mechanistic force is human, is Henry Adams made impersonal and passive. From this perfectly balanced equation, the symbolism is developed on the one hand in terms of architecture, art, philosophy, persons, and events (stained glass windows, figures of saints, the rebellion of Pierre le Droux, the poetry of Thibault, the philosophy of Abelard), on the other in terms of politics, science, philosophy, and again persons and events (Anglo-American diplomacy, the geology of Sir Charles Lyell, two World's Fairs, William Henry Seward, and Lord John Russell).

Intricate and balanced as these imaginative elements are, it would be a mistake to hold that Adams had perfected a new sort of epic or symbolic form. The result gives the impression of work still in progress as Adams felt that it was. The overall form is massive and sprawling like that of Melville and Whitman, rather than balanced and finished as one knowing the man Adams might expect. He was never satisfied with it, published the books privately, allowed them reluctantly to be offered to the public. But they are thoroughly American in that whatever order and discipline they achieve is organic. The refined inheritor of Adams's energy had allowed his feelings and his understanding to mold their own form about them. "The pen works for itself," he confesses, "and acts like a hand, modeling the plastic material over and over again to a form that suits it best. The form is never arbitrary, but is a sort of growth like crystallization, as any artist knows too well.

Robert E. Spiller, Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, has also taught at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Southern California, and the New School for Social Research. He has written several books on James Fenimore Cooper.

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THE REPERTORY CRITIC

ONE of the stranger musical abnormalties of our time is the status and modus operandi of those commentators on the musical scene, the music critics. The record reviewer, as a newly sprouted and somewhat tender offshoot of the not very ancient tree of music criticism, is still doubtfully situated.

I shall have to deny that I, as a record reviewer, am a music critic in the usual present-day sense. First, because I am more interested in music itself than in its performance. Second, because I am passionately addicted to non-repertory music.

The duty of today's music critic is mainly to judge performance, because performance is what makes music go 'round. His judgments in this respect are meticulous, accurate, and above all *comparative;* to make them he must necessarily be a repertory man. His knowledge of standard concert and recital items must be prodigious, whether it be Wagner, Italian opera, or Chopin, Schubert, lieder, or the Brahms symphonies. His life is largely spent gathering repertory know-how; his write-up, if it is good, is tempered by the past experience of perhaps hundreds of playings of the same notes.

All of which is legitimate and of concrete informational value, the concert world being what it is. Yet in acquiring this immense repertorial experience a seasoned music critic is likely perforce to leave unused an equally important critical faculty—the judgment of *the music itself.* That is a faculty which is best exercised on unfamiliar or new music.

I am no critic in this sense because I have made the gigantic personal discovery that in all truth the very greatest music (for anybody) and most of the best, at this tiny instant in history, lies utterly outside and beyond the small corner of music that is the concert repertory-of-the-moment, the popular, the best-seller works that so preoccupy the music makers and hence the music critics, too; that the standard "great works" are less than the scarce drop in the bucket, alongside of all the great works of music. Dangerous discovery! Once on the trail of this kind of heresy, fresh proofs multiply. This week, for instance, I am singing in an entire concert of French Renaissance music by men whose names are meaningless even to many musicians—Brumel, Compère, Mouton, De la Rue, Josquin, Le Jeune, Janiquin. To the best of my belief much of this very music ranks with the greatest of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven; and more—once learned and familiar—it is so utterly timeless in its human feelings and musical expression as to be perfectly contemporary. This is music on a par with Shakespeare. How, I ask, could a music critic believe *this*—and follow his repertory?

I play, too, in a quartet of recorders, a most un-repertory instrument! Not to be precious, but because I can cope with the instrument and because for centuries great (and unknown) music was composed for its use, music that I can play. Again, I recently resurrected from dusty oblivion on a major publisher's shelves a fine set of published music, first rate in quality, that clearly hadn't been touched for decades. Good music, printed, edited, ready to perform for the asking. But no one had asked. It was just not conventional repertory.

And so it goes. As a music critic I am beyond recall, for no critic can afford to know much of this music, either old or new, and keep his job! Lucky the record reviewer; he can at least choose his own programs. And if he takes the bull by the horns he may even exert a certain non-repertory influence on behalf of the record buyers, who—if they only knew—would buy all the non-repertory stuff the industry could put out.

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Narcotic nonsense of a dollar daze,
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The transfer to the next stupidity
By unctuous voices of cupidity
Is planned to seconds, seldom is disturbed,
The sacred cow of sales must not be curbed;
Whatever wordy mess promotes a ware
Must be ingested and put on the air;
The wonder is that those who must condone
Have not placed basins by each microphone.
In mitigation of the felt offense
They plead such utter nonsense pays for sense,
That symphony and sporting coverage
Must sink or swim in suds and beverage;
Free enterprise is dragged in for applause
Though no one yet is able to show cause
Why minimums of taste and probity
Are incompatible with liberty.
Comedians may use a honeyed sting
To gain a laugh that helps to sell a thing,
But no rebellion is allowed a voice,
And sycophancy can't afford a choice.
To have or not to have: that is the question,
Luxury sanctifies the worst suggestion;
Success writes Fame in dazzling dollar signs;
Integrity protests, and then resigns.
Eight easy bucks, and candy by the pound—
That lady knows a fact: the world is round!
Or take the Fyrepruf fireproofed roof:
A roof that's proof is—*Right!*—it's FYREPRUF!
The sound man toots and bangs and clicks away
And disembodied voices breathe and bray,
And into empty words to fill the chasm
They pour professional enthusiasm.
At one 'til midnight still the pedlars say,
Get tantalizing Tootsie Tips TODAY!
And theirs are never good like all the rest,
Oh, no, but super-duper-super-best!
Ingredients all scanned in field and sheaf,
They pick them grain by grain and leaf by leaf,
And whoop of luscious soup for livelihood
With that long quiver of ecstasy, "*Um-m-m! Go-o-od!*"
See! Sun-drenched branches clap their leaves for joy
And sugary sap swells up with pride; O Boy!
They cry, Just think, now isn't it just dandy?
We're going to make a simply super candy!
The multi-million dollar patents spill
From chromium pipes the latest "hot flash" swill;
To waiting thousands tuned to hear what's new
They bring a hireling's hash of gab and goo,
And not content for silly words to bring it
They get some even sillier crew to sing it!
The world's affairs, grave messages of state,
Expert opinion, studied worth or weight
May clear the ether for a little time,
Then comes the deluge drowning it in slime.
The preface to confusion's slanged about
In doubletalk by hep-cophants, the stout
Though stylish and the tautly typed, that play
With unreality, the smart Gay Way,
Obscure the truth, exalt the goose of gold,
Squawking of freedom; doing what they're told . . .

The dial is set, the radios are still,
Then comes a voice with some new fuehrer's will,
And servile lips adapt to this new style.
To save their jobs, they click and answer, *Heil!*

A. H. GRIFFING.

* * *

The League to Support Poetry, 327 West 18th St., NYC, is celebrating its tenth anniversary by launching its own poetry magazine, *The New Quarterly of Poetry*, and by sponsoring a series of poetry broadcasts, "Invitation to Poetry," in cooperation with the "Reader's Almanac" program (WNYC, Mondays, 8:30 P.M.) directed by Dr. Warren Bower of NYU. On January 6, "Invitation to Poetry" broadcasted selections from the first two issues of *The New Quarterly of Poetry;* and on January 27 there was a round-table discussion of the subject "The Poet and the Critic," with J. Donald Adams and Sara Henderson Hay.

Membership in the league is open to all who are interested in poetry; dues of $3 a year entitle each member to a copy of the league's annual prize-award volume, and all issues of *The New Quarterly of Poetry.*

* * *

Hilton Addison Wick, M.D., of 208 Broad Street, New Bethlehem, Pa., communicates as follows:

Some time ago I saw the name of John Stapleton Cowley-Brown in the Nest and rejoiced that he was still with us.

He is one of my most refreshing memories of some almost forty years ago. Then he edited a book page in a small magazine called *Ten Story Book* which I used to slyly read up at the telephone office because mama did not approve of the covers showing ladies' limbs and such. The phone girls, true ever to type, were broadminded, even then.

Anyway, Mr. Brown wrote much caustic criticism and was especially vitriolic re the Rev. Cyrus Townsend Brady who was then popular. Inevitably his books were classified in the list of "Recent Rubbish" as opposed to the parallel column "Recent Books." Mr. Brown often used a single line to review Brady's books, and it was the quote "man's inhumanity to man, etc." He loved to refer to certain authors as "paper blackeners" and "ruthless destroyers of virginal white paper" and I often wondered in my childish innocence why Mr. Brady didn't shoot him pronto. I am happy Mr. Cowley-Brown still lives, loves, laughs.

* * *

. . . until next week.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued on page 38)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 37

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 674

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

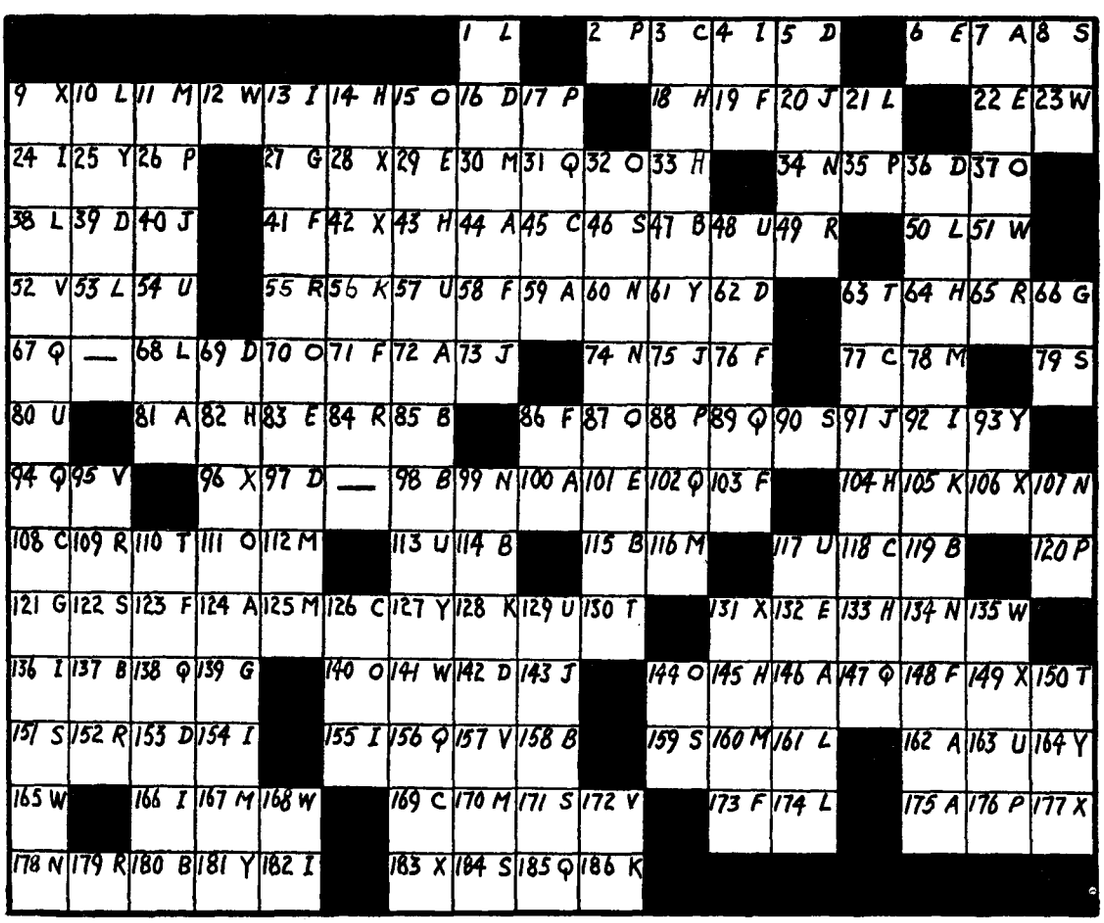
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Tragedy by Marlowe (With "The"; 1633).	44 7 162 59 146 81 72 100 124 175
B. Pertaining to dancing.	158 114 180 137 119 85 115 47 98
C. A lout; bumpkin (Dial.).	118 3 169 77 45 126 108
D. Kind of piano piece of free form, exuberant, with a number of themes (Schumann).	39 97 142 5 62 153 36 69 16
E. To utter rebukes, reproaches, etc. (2 wds.).	6 132 29 101 83 22
F. A deep-toned brass instrument of the key-bugle class, no longer used (Music).	173 41 19 123 86 148 76 58 103 71
G. A sobbing sound.	139 66 121 27
H. Name of five popes, the first of whom is said to have sent St. Patrick to Ireland.	104 14 64 43 33 18 133 145 82
I. Growing spontaneously but not native, as a weed (Bot.).	166 154 4 92 182 136 155 13 24
J. An American Indian (2 wds.).	75 143 40 73 20 91
K. A King, subject of one of Shakespeare's tragedies.	128 186 56 105
L. Members of one of the Sunnite sects, chiefly in Egypt and Arabia.	10 53 38 174 1 50 21 161 68
M. Disease of a nail of a finger or toe (Med.).	170 167 78 11 160 116 112 125 30
N. The commander of a fleet (Gr. Antiq.).	60 99 134 74 178 107 34
O. More spiny or brambly.	111 140 87 15 32 144 37 70
P. American actor (1879- ; Cyrano, Richelieu, Shakespearean parts).	2 35 176 120 17 26 88
Q. Fossorial; burrowing.	138 89 185 31 67 147 102 156 94
R. Pertaining to an extensive marshy region between Rome and Naples, now partly reclaimed.	109 65 55 152 179 84 49
S. Total sum of charges, esp. at a restaurant or hotel (Fr.).	122 151 46 8 184 159 90 171 79
T. Revolving.	110 150 63 130
U. A European annual herb widely naturalized in the New World, and in Calif. yielding honey.	117 113 48 163 129 80 57 54
V. A knoll suitable for a house (Now Dial. Eng.).	52 95 172 157
W. The animal and plant life present in soils (Biol.).	135 168 141 165 23 12 51
X. Lamb wrote humorously about "Poor" ones.	42 177 183 106 149 9 28 131 96
Y. The older of two alphabets of Kashmir akin to the Devanagari.	25 61 164 127 93 181

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 15 of this issue.

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We are very excited about a new novel on our Spring List. Would you like to join the critics in reading it before it is published?

ON March 14th we are going to publish a novel called AURORA DAWN. It is a first book by an extraordinary writer, Herman Wouk. Everyone here at Essandess who has read the manuscript or galleys, thinks it is easily one of the best and most exciting first novels we have ever published. (In fact, the galleys were in such demand that every set of them mysteriously disappeared long before bound copies were ready.)

As you may know, the customary procedure is to send out the first printed copies that come off the press to book editors for review. In addition we often send advance copies to prominent people who we think should have a particular interest in the particular book—authors, professors, radio commentators, and so on. In this way we receive interesting advance reactions which not only help us to tell the general public about the book, but also enable us to make our advertising and printing plans.

In the case of AURORA DAWN, however, what we are most curious about is how it will be received by you, the reader (we cannot call you "the ordinary reader" because there is no such thing). The reason we are curious is that AURORA DAWN, although hardly what you would call an experimental novel, departs radically from the main current of the contemporary novel. A quick look at how Herman Wouk came to write this book and you will see what we mean.

LT. WOUK (now a civilian) began writing AURORA DAWN four years ago in the South Pacific and completed the first part aboard a minesweeper off Okinawa. As a matter of fact, he had originally planned it in his mind as a play, but during an earlier New Zealand shore leave he had picked up a stack of great old novels in the tradition of Thackeray, Dickens, Fielding. Back on ship, re-reading these old masters, he began to wonder whether their rich language and humor were really obsolete, or whether the modern bare-bones "frank" novelists had not set up conventions more narrow than the ones they broke down.

It occurred to him that it might be interesting to write his 20th Century story (about, among other things, how a radio evangelist defied a tyrannical tycoon) in the manner of an 18th Century novel. He completed several chapters and sent them to a former professor in New York City.

The manuscript made such a strong impression upon the professor that he quoted the first few pages from memory to one of our editors who happened to be dining with him. We immediately contracted to publish the novel with what was exceptional enthusiasm for even such habitual enthusiasts as publishers.

Even though excerpts are never as satisfactory when ripped from their contexts, we cannot resist letting you sample some of the flavor of AURORA DAWN with this passage from Pages 85 and 86:

THE snow is falling in a whirling veil in Central Park tonight. It has been falling steadily and heavily since sunset, and the trees are laden with a decorative burden, while the lawns and asphalt roads are blanketed in silent whiteness. The lamps are haloes around which dance innumerable snowflakes, fluttering ever down and down like dying little white moths. The winding roads inside the park are deserted, and, as they gather the whiteness undisturbed, they are gradually merging into the lawns out of which they were first gashed. It is with difficulty that the ancient cab driver atop the ancient hansom cab—which intensifies the solitude by being the sole moving thing in it—can see his way through the sooty night and the milky storm, but the sense of the horse is better than the cabman's eye, and he plods surely along straightways and around curves that are stamped into his muscles. The noise of his hoofs is muffled to a padding such as might be made by a giant cat. Inside the cab, the young couple are as completely alone as they might be at either Pole. This is well, since they are locked in most affectionate embrace.

It is with regret that I must identify the couple as Andrew Reale and Carol Marquis.

They remain thus, mouth to mouth, clinging to each other as the cab rocks them gently, for a length of time that is better imagined than specified. At last Carol takes her burning mouth from his, and, leaning back into his arms, whispers, "I know all about you. You're engaged to Honey Beaton. Why are you doing this to me?" Andrew's eyes are looking into hers. "I don't know why I'm doing it. Shall I stop?" A little white hand steals into the plentiful fair hair on the back of his head, and his mouth is softly pulled down on hers once more.

Sweet friend, may Heaven preserve you from error and keep you safe in the good paths of life; but if you are fated to stray, in order to learn the bitter lessons of straying, may one of your sins be a hansom cab ride through Central Park in a snowstorm, wrapped in the arms of a young creature who is not yours.

PERHAPS all this doesn't give you a very concrete idea of What the Book Is About, but it should suggest to you that AURORA DAWN is an unusual book. We won't try to tell you more about it here because it is an extremely difficult book to describe. Instead we would like to send you an advance copy so that you may judge its worth for yourself. Because we are so happy with AURORA DAWN, we would like to see it attract the flocks of readers it so richly deserves—and readers of the *Saturday Review of Literature* are usually the bellwethers of the flocks. So if you would like to take a chance (although, as you will see, your pocketbook is not involved in the gamble), here is the plan:

1) Write at once and ask us to send you C.O.D. an *advance* review copy of AURORA DAWN (price $2.75). If you wish, use the Invitation Form printed below.

2) Immediately upon receipt of your order, we will mail you an advance copy. This means, if you act at once, that you will be reading AURORA DAWN at least two weeks before the book is published and placed on sale in bookstores (March 14).

3) We are eager to get your reactions quickly—to help us in making our plans for the book and in telling other readers about it. Therefore the price of the book will be refunded to the first 100 participants in this plan who send us their comments—favorable or unfavorable.

4) We must admit the remote possibility that a few of you won't like AURORA DAWN. In that case, however unlikely it may be, will you do us the favor of returning the book and letting us refund your $2.75 in full?

We think you will enjoy participating in this "sneak preview," as it were—and enjoy even more the thrill of discovering an important new writer several weeks before the critics break the news to the general reading public.

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